CDXC CHILTERN DX CLUB The UK DX Foundation

Newsletter

May 1994 CDXC - The UK DX Foundation Issue 89

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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: JUNE 7th

CHILTERN DX CLUB - *The UK DX Foundation* - Aims and Objectives

From the Constitution: ***"The aim of the Club will be to promote excellence in HF operating, particularly DXing, through mutual assistance and by encouraging support of DXpeditions, the issue of achievement awards, or whatever other means is deemed to be appropriate"***

From the Prospectus: ***"CDXC caters for amateurs with an interest in competitive activity on the HF bands (DXing, contesting, award chasing, etc.)"***

Membership: Membership of CDXC is open to any amateur or SWL who has 100 DXCC countries confirmed on the HF bands. New members must be proposed by at least two club members.

Subscriptions: The annual subscription is currently set at £10.00 for UK members, and £15.00 for overseas members. The subscription for new members joining between 1st January and 30th June is 50% of the annual subscription. Subscriptions become due on July 1st in each year, and should be sent to the Treasurer (address above).

Newsletter: This newsletter is published six times per year. Articles for publication should be sent to the Newsletter Editor (address above) by the published deadline. Please note that opinions expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Committee.

EDITORIAL - *Alan Jubb, G3PMR*

Another CDXC year draws to a close - my first as Newsletter Editor. I have to say that I have enjoyed my year as editor, and have found the task to be less difficult than I had imagined it would be. This is in no small part due to the excellent input that I have had from many members, for which I am indebted. In this issue, you will find some articles from non-members, in particular, Peter, ON6TT has submitted a fascinating article on the 3Y0PI DXpedition to Peter 1st (see later for details of video availability), and Fred, G4BWP has brought us up to date on the RSGB Commonwealth Century Club Awards. Many thanks to both of them. The preparation of this issue was unusual in that I received quite a lot of input in hard copy only form, which had to be re-typed. I'd like to thank Trish, XYL of Neville, G3NUG, who helped out with the typing load.

The 1994 Annual Review Meeting (ARM) will be held at the QTH of John Linford, G3WGV, on Saturday May 14th, at 2.00pm. This is an opportunity for all members to influence the way that CDXC is run over the next year, both by electing the Committee, and by raising issues for discussion and action by the new Committee. Do please try and attend. However, if you are unable to attend, but wish to raise items for discussion, please send them to David, G0HXN, in good time. The Committee will be elected at this meeting, so please send nominations for any or all positions to David, G0HXN. John, G3WGV, and Keith, G3VKW will not be standing again due to work commitments.

Do you have all the up to the minute information available that you need to work all the DX that's about? I was very surprised to learn recently that around 25% of CDXC members (mostly G0s) do not subscribe to the excellent RSGB DX News Sheet, edited by Bren, G4DYO, and issued on a weekly basis. Full details of subscription rates etc. of DXNS are available from RSGB HQ - please *do not* contact G4DYO for information. Whilst it is true that some of the information in DXNS can be found on the PacketCluster network, there is much advance information in DXNS about DXpeditions that is not found there, and an added bonus is that everything is to hand in a single four page document. If you don't subscribe, contact the RSGB right away!

In a recent FAX received from ON6TT, Peter advises that the 3Y0PI QSLs will be distributed around the time this newsletter comes through your letter box - I hope that you get yours!

There are a number of outstanding DXCC issues about at the moment, e.g. the status of Pratas, TRNC, Mount Athos, Scarborough Reef, Walvis Bay and Penguin Island, etc. I've included as many snippets of information as I can find on these, and have also included one view of the TRNC situation. By all accounts, DXCC applications are being processed at record speed now, and I've included an article on the background to the improvements, which I hope will be of interest.

One of the more interesting contests, which, I am sure will find its place on the contest calendar as one of those not to be missed, is the IOTA Contest. I've included a full set of rules in this issue, and (if I'm still editor!) would like to publish in the July issue of the Newsletter, details of all planned activity by G stations (especially CDXC members), so please let me have details about *your* plans.

Another innovation in this issue is the inclusion of two articles on LF band antennas, by Bob, G3PJT, and Don, G3OZF. I'd very much like to receive more articles of this type, as they add a little variety to the Newsletter.

Well, that's all for this month - hope to see you at the ARM. 73 de Alan, G3PMR

(See p46 for The Chairman's Bit, which arrived after I'd printed the master.)

JOTTINGS OF THE SECRETARY
Dave Mann G0HXN

Hopefully I will meet as many of you as can turn up at the Annual Meeting. If you cannot get to the Annual Review Meeting and wish to raise any matters, please feel free to drop me a line and I will introduce it to the meeting.

At this moment as I write this two new IOTA spots have appeared Rockall and Banaba, it is nice to hear T33 on 18 MHz, especially as the club, as well as several others contributed towards the cost of the antenna. Thanks to G4DYO for the initial idea. May I pass my congratulations onto Roger G3SXW for being elected DXer of the year, I am sure all who heard Roger were highly impressed by his handling of the pile-ups, what an example to others.

I am at the moment compiling a series of stories of DXpeditions by CDXC members over the last couple of years, this hopefully will be published in the near future, and proceeds to be donated to Club funds, which will go towards financing further DXpeditions. If you have a story to tell, or have activated an IOTA island, and will allow the club publish your story please contact me, at the moment I have the makings of half a book, but need more, with photographs if possible. Over the last months it has been nice to speak to many of you on the telephone, thank you for your interest in the club, and many good ideas which you have given me. I hope you will all make you bookings early for the IHFC in October, the programme looks really good, with something of interest for everybody. Trio-Kenwood (UK) have generously donated a TS-50S Transceiver as first prize in the raffle, but tickets for this and many other valuable prizes will only be on sale at the Convention. Tickets for the HF dinner will this year I am sure be in great demand, as will tickets to the 30th Birthday Party for IOTA which will be held on the Friday. So get your bookings in early, as usual first come first served. (The dining room will have new tables and chairs this year !)

I shall be on my travels around the UK again in mid June, and I have already arranged several "eyeballs" with club members, so if you don't make it to the ARM and you see an Astra towing a caravan pull up outside your house, its me. 73 and Gd DX. Dave.

LETTERS

Apologies for no input from this end for some time Alan. Although I HAVE been very busy (as the XYL will confirm!>) removing my tower from site and replacing it with a new Heavy Duty version!

I came a cropper early in December when my KLM KT34XA ripped itself off the top of the tower during the gales; I have had time to take stock of the situation and decided to replace the lot with a HD tower (+ Heavy Duty rotator), last weekend saw the laying of the concrete for the tower base with, hopefully, the bottom section in place over the Easter holiday. Following advice from cluster users, I have invested in a Create RC5B3 rotator, which I am told will "turn anything, and keep it there". That for me should be a Cushcraft 40-2CD stacked with a KLM KT34XA, although funds may only permit the 40 metre beam initially with the other to follow (sometime! HI!). At the moment I am making do with a "modified" HF2V; modified in that it works on 21/24 MHz in addition to 1.8/3.5/7. It's something I suppose, but I miss not having the tower to hang things on!

73 for now, de Steve GW4BLE

ADVANCE CONTEST INFORMATION - *Bruce Gilson, G4WVX*

Space does not permit inclusion of the full rules, so an abbreviated version is shown, together with the source of that information - thanks go to RadCom, QST and CQ magazines. For those that do not have access to these comics, I can supply a copy of the rules as published. Some of the details are from the previous year, as the latest rules have often not been published in the comics in time for inclusion here. I may well have more recent versions of the rules nearer the actual contest date.

May 28/29 CQ WW WPX (CW) (CQ Jan 94/QST Feb 94)
0000-2400Z RST + Serial 160-10m
Single-Op single & all-band, QRP(<=5W out), Low(<=100W out), High pwr, Assisted
All single-Ops operate max 36 hrs
Multi-Op all-band only, single(10 min rule) & multi-Tx
Multi-multi use separate serials each band, others use continuous serials
Double points on 160, 80 & 40m. Work everyone once per band, own country for mult only
Prefixes count once only, irrespective of band.

Jun 04/05 National Field Day (CW) (RC Feb 92(/93/94))
1500-1500Z RST + Serial 160-10m
Open section: Multi-Op only, Single Tx/Rx or Tx & Rx
Single/multi-ant, max height 20m, <=100W output
Restricted section: Single Tx/Rx or Tx & Rx, single-ant, single ele, 2 or less elevated supports max height 11m, <=100W output
Low power section: As restricted, but <=5W output
Double points on 160 & 10m. Site notification by 23 Apr 94

Jun 19/20 All Asia DX (CW) (QST Jun 93/RC Jun 93)
0000-2400Z RST + Age YLs send 00 160-10m Work Asia only

Jun 25/26 Summer 160m (CW) (RC May 93)
2100-0100 RST + Serial + County Code 1.820-1.870 MHz Work everyone

Jul 10/11 IARU HF World Championship (CW & Phone) (RC Jul 93)
1200-1200Z RS(T)+ ITU Zone (UK=27)

Jul 17 Low Power Field Day (CW) (RC Apr 94)
0900-1200Z & 1300-1600Z RST + Serial + County Code + Power(1W0 sent for 1W etc.)
3.510-3.560 MHz & 7.010-7.040 MHz only, Single or Multi-Op, <=10W, <=5W output
Ants not above 35 ft, no more than 2 elevated supports
Battery, solar, wind etc. power only, no generators

Jul 30/31 IOTA (CW & Phone) (RC Mar 94)
See full rules in this Newsletter
1200-1200Z RST + Serial + IOTA Reference(if applicable) 80-10m
Single-Op CW only, Phone only or mixed, no DX Cluster etc.
Single-Op Limited CW only, Phone only or mixed, 12 hrs only, 3 bands only, no DX Cluster etc.
Multi-Op single Tx, DX Cluster etc. permitted

As usual, any suggestions for inclusion here and contest sites etc. are gladly welcomed. I can be contacted via DX Cluster (@GB7DXI), the BBS system (@GB7TXA) in addition to the details published in the newsletter.

CQ WW WPX PHONE CONTEST
Bruce Gilson, G4WVX

I had planned to include a reasonable list of claimed scores in this issue, but it has been difficult getting the information - I believe this is mainly due to limited protocol links within DX Cluster (this is not a moan at the Sysops, I know very well that they are doing their best). Information is trickling in via DX Cluster and the BBS network. A list will be included in the next newsletter. Any scores will be gladly received either via DX Cluster (@GB7DXI) or BBS (@GB7TXA). A list of Qs and Mults per band, totals, list of operators, QTH, set-up and class of entry will be useful. Depending on the response, the details may need to be pruned.

I currently have information from G3OZF, GW4BLE, G4BUO and GI0KOW.

It is always worth passing scores on to me, so they can be collated and published in the newsletter.

ARRL 10m CONTEST
December 11/12 1993
Bruce Gilson, G4WVX

It was decided that a multi-op CDXC entry should be put in for the ARRL 10m contest in December 1993. Perhaps we should have paid attention to the sunspot situation, but on the other hand at least we were not all completely worn out by the time work on the Monday morning came around.

The contest ran from 0000Z Saturday to 2400Z Sunday with a maximum permitted operating time of 36 hours. The object was to work anyone and everyone who could be found on 10m, phone and CW, with US states and Canadian provinces as multipliers along with DXCC countries.

The team consisted of Don G3OZF, Clive G3XMZ, Colin G3YBT, John G4DQW and Bruce G4WVX. The QTH was G3OZF, near Aylesbury, Bucks, using Don's callsign. The gear was a TS-930 and TH6DXX running legal limit. A receive station was also operating using an FT-890 and various antennas. Logging was done using CT (V8.49) with two networked PCs and a huge amount of help was obtained from the continuous supply of spots on DX Cluster.

Part one started at 0643Z on the Saturday, working VK at 0824Z and VS6 at 1130Z, although W/VE was not worked until 1221Z. Propagation to W/VE had expired by 1830Z and soon afterwards the team dispersed for the evening. I accepted Don's invitation to join his family for a superb dinner at a delightful Indian restaurant in Aylesbury - we wondered if this was going to be a mistake for Sunday with all the ops crowded into the shack!

Part two of the effort started on Sunday at 0714Z with nothing worked further east than VU. W/VE appeared at the same time, but the band was generally much more lively on the second day, with W/VE coming and going until 2000Z.

233 QSOs were achieved on the first day and 307 on the second. The CW/SSB split was 248/292, countries were 51/65 and states were 23/27 respectively. Total claimed score was 261,616 - in the 1992 contest that would have placed CDXC in fifth place in the UK multi-ops. The results are likely to be published in July 1994 QST and should make it into the September 1994 CDXC Newsletter.

Many thanks, again, go to Don G3OZF and his wife Chris for the use of their home and for keeping us topped up with food and drink. Thanks also to all the ops for travelling from their various homes to take part in the fun.

RSGB Islands On The Air Contest 1994.

Following the great success of the first IOTA Contest in 1993,the rules have been reviewed in the light of entrants' comments. The major changes are the inclusion of CW, points credit for contact with one's own country, and a limited (12 hour) category.

1. GENERAL

The aim of the contest is to promote contacts between stations in qualifying IOTA island groups and the rest of the world and to encourage expeditions to IOTA islands. UK entrants must be RSGB members - see the general rules for HF contests published in January 1994 Radio Communication.

Note: Mainland G/GM/GW = EU005
Mainland GI/EI = EU115

2. WHEN

1200 UTC Saturday 30th July to 1200 UTC Sunday 31st July 1994.

3. BANDS AND MODES

3.5, 7, 14, 21 and 28MHz, CW and SSB. IARU band plans must be observed, and CW contacts must be made only in the recognised CW ends of the bands. Contest preferred segments must also be observed, i.e. no operation must take place on 3.56 - 3.60 MHz, 3.65 - 3.70 MHz, 14.06 - 14.125 and 14.30 - 14.35 MHz.

4. CATEGORIES

(a) Single operator.

CW only, SSB only or mixed-mode.

(b) Single operator limited.

CW only, SSB only or mixed-mode. Operation is limited to 12 hours, and contacts on any THREE bands count for points. Off periods must be clearly marked and must be a minimum of 60 minutes in length.

(c) Multi operator single transmitter.

Mixed mode. Only one transmitted signal.

Use of packet cluster or other assistance during the contest places the entrant in the multi operator category.

5. SECTIONS

(a) IOTA Island Stations.

Stations on an island with an IOTA reference, for example AS007, EU005. This section includes the British Isles. Entrants intending to operate from a location whose IOTA status is not clear are advised to confirm validity by reference to the IOTA directory available from RSGB head-quarters. Please indicate on the entry whether the station is permanent or a contest DXpedition, i.e. antennas and equipment installed specifically for the contest.

(b) World (listed by continent).

Any station in a location which does not have an IOTA reference.

(c) Short Wave Listener. See rule 10.

The format of the listings will depend on the number of entries received.

6. EXCHANGE

Send RS(T) and serial number starting from 001, plus IOTA reference number if applicable. Do not use separate numbering systems for CW and SSB. Stations may be contacted on both CW and SSB on each band. Entrants in section (a) MUST send their IOTA reference as part of each contact.

7. SCORING

(a) QSO Points. Each contact with an IOTA island counts 15 points. Other contacts count 5 points, except contacts with the entrant's own country or own IOTA reference, which count 2 points.

(b) Multiplier. The multiplier is the total of different IOTA references contacted on each band on CW, plus the total of different IOTA references contacted on each band on SSB.

(c) Total Score. The score is the total of QSO points on all bands added together, multiplied by the total of multipliers.

8. LOGS

UK stations must use a Summary Sheet and RSGB-style log sheets, other entrants may use log sheets in local format, together with a summary and signed declaration that the rules and licence conditions have been complied with. Separate log sheets must be used for each band (but not each mode). Single mode entrants who make contacts on the other mode should submit these separately as check logs. Logs must show: Time, Callsign, RST/serial number/IOTA reference sent, RST/serial number/IOTA reference received, multiplier claimed, and QSO points. Entrants are encouraged to submit cross-check ('dupe') sheets and a multiplier list. Logs on computer disk are welcomed, in accordance with RSGB format. Entries must be postmarked 26 August 1994 at the latest, and mailed to the following address:

RSGB IOTA Contest, c/o S. Knowles G3UFY, 77 Bensham Manor Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR7 7AF, England.

IOTA stations must state their location, i.e. island from where they operated, as well as their IOTA reference number. Check logs from non-entrants are welcome.

9. PENALTIES

Points may be deducted, or entrants disqualified, for violation of the rules or the spirit of the contest. This includes refusal by IOTA island stations to make contacts with their own country when requested. Use of a third party to make contacts on a list or net is also against the spirit and may lead to disqualification. Duplicate contacts must be marked as such with no points claimed. Unmarked duplicates will be penalised at ten times the claimed points, and excessive duplicates may cause disqualification.

10. SWL CONTEST

Scoring is as for the transmitting contest. Logs must be separate for each band, and show Time, Callsign of station heard, RST/serial number/IOTA reference sent, callsign of station being worked, multiplier claimed, and QSO points. Under "callsign of station being worked", there must be at least two other QSOs before a callsign is repeated, or else ten minutes must have elapsed. If both sides of a QSO can be heard, they can be logged separately for points if appropriate.

11. AWARDS

(a) The IOTA Trophy (non-returnable) will be presented by the IOTA Committee to the entrant, whether single-operator or a multi-operator group in the IOTA Island Stations Section (DXpedition subsection), with the overall highest checked score, regardless of mode. A trophy will also be awarded to the leading non-DXpedition IOTA entrant, and it is hoped to introduce further trophies as the contest grows.

(b) The DX News Sheet Trophy (retained for one year only) will be presented by the Editor of DX News Sheet to the British

entrant operating from a location in the UK (including GD, GJ and GU) with the highest checked score in the single operator SSB category. The winner of the IOTA Trophy will not be eligible for this award.

(c) Certificates will be awarded to leading stations in each category and section, and in each continent, according to entry.

12. NOTE FROM THE IOTA DIRECTOR

Amateurs planning to activate an all-time new one for IOTA over the IOTA Contest weekend should, if possible, arrange to commence their operation in the preceding 24 hours to enable the new reference number to be issued before the start of the contest. Once the contest is under way, it will not be possible to issue a new number and, without this, contacts made will not count as island contacts.

OFFICIAL IOTA BULLETIN NO.6
(From the UK PacketCluster Network)

(Issued 22 April 1994, incorporating Bulletins 1-5)

These are a series of IOTA Official Bulletins issued by Roger, G3KMA on behalf of the IOTA Committee. They provide information emanating from the Committee, eg new IOTA numbers issued following an operation, decisions about the qualifying status of islands and other "official information", and also information received directly from current or potential island operators. They will generally not include third hand information. These bulletins are NOT intended to duplicate information in IOTA NEWS in DXNS although they may update items appearing there. G3KMA regrets he cannot provide QSL routes or reply to routine enquiries which should go to checkpoints or can be answered by reference to DXNS issues.

ZELENY ISLAND (UA2)

DXNS 1613 carries the correction that Zeleny Island will unfortunately NOT count for IOTA, as it lies in an enclosed bay as defined in the IOTA rules. No information has been received on whether the UA operators have been able to find a qualifying island on this coast.

SANTA MARIA ISLAND (CE1)

A CE1 group including CE1LDS are expecting to activate Santa Maria Island, off the coast of Antofagasta Province, around 29 April. The IOTA Committee has now received a map showing that the island will qualify for that group. The island is not to be confused with the Santa Maria Island mentioned in the Directory in the CE5 area.

GABO ISLAND (VK3)

Following receipt from Kurt, HB9AFI of the written permission for his VK3FBL/P operation from Gabo Island on 14 April, the IOTA Committee has issued the new IOTA number OC-196 for the VICTORIA STATE EAST group. The letter giving permission was obtained from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (Southern Region) in Victoria - signed by the Head Lighthouse Keeper on Gabo, it confirmed that the island was a sanctuary under A.M.S.A.'s direct control. The message from Australia is that visiting amateurs should make sure they get whatever permissions are required before visiting largely uninhabited Australian islands.

IOTA CONTEST PARTICIPANTS

Bren, G4DYO has asked intending island DXpedition stations to let him have the island group number for publication in DXNS. Please also give him the actual name of the island. In cases of doubt whether the island qualifies for IOTA, please check the Directory or contact G3KMA.

ADDITIONS TO IOTA DIRECTORY (OCTOBER 1993 PRINT)

EU-164 GM ROCKALL ISLAND
AF-068 CN/S0 (W. SAHARA) ATLANTIC COAST S. grp (inc. HERNE and islands south of 25N)
AS-110 BV9 DONGSHA ARCHIPELAGO (PRATAS ISLAND)
AS-111 HZ PERSIAN GULF grp (include ABU 'ALI,AL BATINAH,TARUT)
AS-112 A4 GULF OF OMAN grp - include DAYMANIYAT,SUWADI
NA-188 XE3 OAXACA STATE grp (include CACALUTA,etc)
NA-189 XE1 JALISCO/NAYARIT STATE grp - inc. ISABELA,TRES MARIETAS IS
NA-190 YS PACIFIC OCEAN COAST grp (inc. CONCHAGUITA,MEANGUERA)
NA-191 TI7 GUANACASTE PROVINCE grp (inc. HUEVOS,MURCIELAGOS IS)
NA-192 VE8 NWT (INUVIK REGION) W. grp (inc. GARRY,HENDRICKSON,PELLY)
OC-190 KH8 ROSE ATOLL
OC-191 A3 NIUATOPUTAPU ISLAND (include TAFAHI)
OC-192 H4 ONTONG JAVA ATOLL (include RONCADOR REEF)
OC-193 VK6 W.AUSTRALIA STATE (S.COAST) W. grp (inc. CHEYNE,ECLIPSE)
OC-194 VK2 NEW SOUTH WALES STATE NORTH grp (include SOLITARY IS)
OC-195 VK7 FURNEAUX GROUP (include CURTIS,HOGAN and KENT GROUPS)
OC-196 VK3 VICTORIA STATE EAST grp (include GABO)
SA-065 LU/W CHUBUT PROVINCE SOUTH grp (include BLANCA,LEONES,RASA,TOVA)
SA-066 YV1 ZULIA/FALCON STATE grp (include BARBOZA,BORRACHO)
SA-067 PP1 ESPIRITO SANTO STATE grp (inc. ESCALVADA,RASAS IS,TRES ILHAS)
SA-068 8R ATLANTIC COAST grp (include HOG,LAGUAN,WAKENAAM)

73 Roger, G3KMA, RSGB IOTA Director

UPCOMING FRENCH IOTA IS

From the UK PacketCluster Network

From: DL9NCW

DL2RBY and DL9NCW plan to activate islands near the Armorican coast in France. They try to be QRV from May 25th to June 2nd preferably on the IOTA QRG 14,260 kHz or on 15 metres. Islands to be visited are especially the following:

Ile d'Ouessant	EU - 065
Ile de Sein	EU - 068
Les Glenans	EU - 094

The callsigns will be F/DL2RBY/p and F/DL9NCW/p. QSL go to DL9NCW. Further islands to activate in that region are optional and depend upon weather conds and on time as well.

CONTEST LOGGING PROGRAM FOR THE IOTA CONTEST 30/31 JULY 1994

Paul O'Kane, EI5DI, has generously offered to provide a copy of his Super-Duper contest logging program for this contest for the price of postage (2 IRCs), a self addressed envelope, and a blank, formatted, 3.5" diskette, or 4 IRCs without the diskette. Contact Paul direct at 36 Coolkill, Sandyford, Dublin 18, Ireland. UK readers may contact me (G3PMR), or John Jones, G4PKP, Jason Photo, 24 Mathew Street, Liverpool L2 6RE.

Super-Duper for IOTA may be downloaded, anywhere in the world, from CompuServe. It is stored as SDI.ZIP in the software library

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of the Hamnet Forum, and may be located using the keyword IOTA.

Paul advises me that V6.0 is now available, which has single key strokes for all keyer functions.

IHFC 94

From the UK PacketCluster Network

Bulletin No.3. This is the third of a series of monthly bulletins about this year's HF Convention.

- Dates: 7, 8 & 9 October 1994.
- Location: The Beaumont Conference Centre, Old Windsor, Berks located close to the M25 and Heathrow Airport.

The four page brochure and booking form have been circulated widely during the past three weeks.If anyone still needs a brochure and booking form please contact G3NUG by cluster, mail QTHR or by telephone 0442-62929.

Bookings: There has been a very healthy inflow of bookings so far. As at today's date (22 April) 30 rooms have been booked at the Beaumont; this is extremely encouraging. Everyone is strongly advised to make their reservations quickly as accommodation and places for the DX Dinner and IOTA Birthday Party are limited.

Programme: The programme issued is headed provisional and a number of you have queried this. In fact all the lectures except one are confirmed, timings may vary however.

Saturday is ***Important***: In past years many have only attended the Sunday as this has been traditionally been recognised as the "HF Day". This year is different as all three streams start at 0930 on the Saturday morning and two are solely devoted to HF topics. Very few of the Saturday lectures are repeated on the Sunday. To make the best of this Convention do try to come for the full two days.

Special Interest Groups & Special Displays and Clinics: There will be a number of additional activities running between the lectures and we have now received firm commitments from the following:

- G-QRP-Club
- Aerial planning panel
- 160m DXers
- FOC
- Propagation studies group
- EI5DI SD
- SHACKLOG
- Turbolog
- Henri Meunier F6ALX (Island maps).

Others under discussion include:

- ISWL
- BYLARA
- RAOTA
- AMSAT-UK
- BARTG
- RAFARS
- RSARS
- UK 6m working group
- WABers

Readers may be interested to read the previous bulletins CONV1 and CONV2 in the bulletin area. 73 Neville G3NUG

IHFC-94 - More

Neville G3NUG who is chairing the organising committee reports that ever since the programme and booking forms were issued in early April there has been a healthy flow of bookings for the residential packages, the IOTA Birthday Party and the DX Dinner. If members have not yet booked they are advised to do so quickly.

A considerable number of CDXC members are involved already but more help will be needed nearer the day. Amongst the tasks already identified are:

- Assistance with setting up GB1OTA
- Transport to/from Heathrow outside peak periods when a shuttle will be running
- Organising and setting up the various lecture rooms and displays
- Provision of local accommodation for some visitors perhaps from Eastern Europe
- Manning the CDXC hospitality room.
- Help with the setting up of the DX Quiz

Please let Neville know if you are able to help.

Other CDXC members already involved are:

G0HSD	Andrew	Lecture "First 100 Countries"
G0HXN	Dave	Organising Committee
G0OPB	Tony	Setting up GB1OTA
G3GIQ	Henry	Coordinating transport to/from Heathrow
G3KMA	Roger	Organising Committee and IOTA stream lectures
G3NUG	Neville	Chairman, Organising Committee
G3OUF	David	Organising Committee
G3OZF	Don	Organising Committee
G3PJT	Bob	Chairman - DX Dinner and lecture "Phased Arrays for 80 and 40 M."
G3PMR	Alan	Organising Comittee
G3SXW	Roger	Lecture "ZD9SXW DXpedition"
G3WGV	John	Lecture "VK9MM DXpedition"
G3XTT	Don	Lecture "Computers in the Shack"
G3ZAY	Martin	Organising the IOTA Birthday Party

WELCOME!

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to welcome Brendan Marshall O'Brien, G0UCT, (CROYDON) to the CDXC. I hope that Brendan will enjoy being a member of CDXC, *The UK DX Foundation*, and that you will get involved with one or more of the club's projects throughout the year.

David Mann, G0HXN, Secretary.

DXAC REPORT

From the UK PacketCluster Network

Here is how the DXAC voted on the following issues.

1. Deletion of Walvis Bay and the Penguin Islands. *16-0 to delete.*

2. Additional single band endorseable DXCC awards for 30, 20, and 15 meters, endorsements for 5BDXCC award for 200 and 300 countries, and extended endorsements for 2, 6, 12, 17, and 160 meters for 200 and 300 countries. *2 votes in favor, 13 votes against, and 1 abstention.*

(These issues may be revisited when ARRL upgrades their computer)

3. 10-Meter honor Roll. A requested consideration of an Honor Roll endorsement to the 10-Meter DXCC award. *1 vote in favor, 15 votes against.*

4. Mt. Athos. The ballot was determined to be ambiguous. It will be refined and revoted again in May 1994. The vote was *7 for new country status, 6 against, 1 for and against (confusion), and 1 reworded ballot* (more confusion).

Items 1-3 were forwarded to the ARRL Awards committee for action.

73, Bill, NA2M, 18 April 1994

HOW MEAN CAN YOU GET?

Peter, G3RZP, reports that he recently sent an SAE to Japan, with a 120 Yen stamp + a green stamp + QSL. The envelope size was 9½ x 4½ inches. He got back the same envelope, cut down to 5½ x 4½ , with the address in his writing. The envelope was unsealed, and had an 80 Yen stamp. (120 Yen is the minimum sealed air mail minimum weight from JA). Fortunately, the QSL was still in the envelope!

THE ELECTRONIC DXCC
Reprinted from QST

It's been 2½ years since the DXCC desk made the commitment to full conversion of DXCC record keeping onto the IBM System 38 computer. Although there was much pain and suffering by DXCC Members and ARRL HQ staff during the initial conversion period, most of that is over, and we're down to routine processing of DXCC applications. Not since the early 1970s has DXCC processing been as nearly current as it is now.

Initially, the problems that caused the delays stemmed from the conversion of the old records. This was necessary because QST listings and the Honor Roll had to be compiled from the computer records. We couldn't afford the errors and extra processing time that would result from trying to maintain a dual record system during the transition period. This was compounded by the fact that there were errors in counts in the old records, and some credits were recorded in the wrong place. All these corrections, the conversions and the processing had to take place at the same time. An endorsement couldn't be processed until the conversion was completed. After more than 3,000,000 conversion credits had been processed, (equal to six years worth of regular processing) and more than 600,000 country credits from applications and endorsements, we were finally caught up.

Now that the system is working, here's what we can do:

- We can enter all the information from a single QSL card, so that we never have to see that card again. It can be used for all awards you apply for, now or in the future.
- We track your progress towards all awards we offer. The endorsable awards will show on your records by band, mode, and country. The non-endorsable awards are kept only as a maximum group of 100 countries per band.
- We track progress toward the Honor Roll.
- We provide listings for publication in QST.
- We can run a report that shows the "Most Needed" countries.

Because of limitations of the hardware and because it will be replaced in the future, there are things that can't be done now even though we consider them desirable.

We can't upload files from diskettes from the field. (We consider this essential to further expansion of the Field Checking program.)

We can't expand the DXCC program itself at this time because no further programming effort will be expended on the DXCC program (except for obvious bug fixes) until a hardware change is made.

We won't have the ability to accept files from DXpeditions until the next generation of hardware and programming is complete. At present, we anticipate that it will be about three years before the next generation of hardware and software is in place and tested.

We won't have the ability to fine tune the "Most Needed" listing by continent or other area until the next generation.

We don't have the ability to be the master data base for all DX contacts ever made. That would require more disk storage space than is presently available.

Here's how you can help us be even more efficient:

- Humans make errors. To help us , if you find an error in your record, let us know as soon as possible. Errors have an effect on your DXCC listing. If we don't know soon enough, your listing will be incorrect in QST, or skipped entirely.

- Don't try to correct an error you find by re-submitting the same card in your next submission. If we made an input error, you probably have credit for something else in your record that doesn't belong. We need to know about the error so we can correct it.

- Please don't send back cards to correct an error unless we ask for them. In most cases, we find that there's been a typographical error. If we can't find anything in the record, we'll ask for the card.

- Please sort your cards in band order, then mode order, when sending them in. In the paper record days, there was a reason for sending them in alphabetical order, but that reason no longer exists.

- Please don't send any card you've sent to us since October 1991. We already have every entry on those cards recorded.

DXers are now enjoying the most accurate data base we've ever had. They're enjoying the shortest turn around time in the recent history of the DXCC program. We're happy about that, and hope you are, too.

WAITING FOR RECOGNITION - AMATEUR RADIO OR AMATEUR POLITICS

Igor Zdorov, KU0J

After my recent visit to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), and operating from there for three weeks as 1B/KU0J, I re-read Chod Harris' reaction to the first amateur radio operation from there, 1BNCC (*1B1NCC: Pirate Station or Political Statement?* by Chod Harris, VP2ML, CQ Magazine, November 1992, pp136-144). The highlight of this article is calling 1B1NCC "a pirate station", based on first reaction to this operation by 5B (Greek controlled side of the island), and mainland Greeks. (The NCC suffix stands for Northern Cyprus Club).

The author referred to extensive deliberate QRM by the above mentioned parties, and I was wondering how my operation would go. Times are changing, of course. Since 1B1NCC, the Telecommunication Administration of TRNC has issued four permanent, licences, and one temporary licence (to DL7ZZ), before mine. At least one more temporary operation is planned now. (*Ed: 1B/DJ6SI was active recently*)

To my surprise, my operation went quite smoothly. Only once a local policeman knocked on my door, to check, as he put it, "what that hanging thing was". After receiving a quick explanation of what amateur radio is all about, examining my licence, and making a phone call to verify that indeed such a licence had been issued (amateur radio is new in TRNC), he laughed and explained that he was called by our curious landlord. We parted as best friends. There was no problem with TVI or RFI, as far as I know. There was very little jamming, no more than during my several previous operations from Turkey, and definitely way less than many other DXpeditions have had. Very few stations called me "a pirate"

(probably influenced by VP2ML's article), and this was always quickly and gracefully resolved on the air. As an unexpected and very pleasant surprise, a few 5B and SV contacts that I made, were among the most courteous. I was very pleased with this positive development in our amateur world.

But what was the reason for the critical antagonism against 1B1NCC by some people? To explain this, Chod Harris chose to resort to a two page long analysis of the history of Cyprus, in the course of which, he, to no one's surprise, could not stay away from some side-taking. Going through his analysis and disputing his statements, point by point, is beyond the scope of my article. The fact is that the failure to find a solution to a centuries old conflict between Greek and Turkish Cypriots by Britain, The United Nations, and many professional politicians' arguments, obviously cannot be helped much by an argument between Mr. Harris and myself. The self-determination efforts of ethnic minorities, oppressed for a very long time, has become a symbol of the last quarter of the 20th century. The examples of former USSR and Yugoslavia show plenty of proof that even professional politicians often do not know the right way (if there is such a thing) to run the world. The establishment of TRNC in 1983 by a 70% majority vote, was preceded by numerous cases of ethnic cleansing against the Turkish minority. Many of these cases were officially authorised, like the 1963 "Akritiras Plan", openly calling for annihilation of the Turkish community. What was going on was very similar to the holocaust against Jewish people, only on a smaller scale, because of the smaller size of the Turkish Cypriot community to begin with.

The attempt to run a joint government of Cyprus with fair representation of both Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities (1960 Constitution) was under constant pressure from the Greek majority for "Enosos" - union with Greece. Needless to say, there was no room for the Turkish minority in it. After surviving a few blows, in 1974 this elected government was overthrown by a coup engineered by Greek junta, and the beginning of ethnic cleansing was imminent, At that point, Turkey, acting under the Treaty of Guarantee, sent in troops to save the Turkish Cypriot community. This was followed by a referendum by Turkish Cypriots. The Turkish Federated State of Cyprus was established and became the foundation of the future TRNC. The Turkish army took no part in the politics - it was only protecting the minority, the duty that UN Peace Keeping Forces failed to perform. To no one's surprise, the subsequent talks on re-unification failed, as did the joint Government of Cyprus before hand.

Many other minorities have succeeded in gaining their rights for an independent state, as in former USSR or Yugoslavia, unfortunately hardly ever without a massive loss of life, and most definitely always leaving a lot of opposition behind. As much as many Greek people may be unhappy with TRNC existence (a reality over 10years), so are many Serbian people with the Bosnian declaration of independence. I have not heard, however, of any cases of Bosnian hams being called "pirates" by Serbs on these grounds, and if they did, obviously not too many listened. Bosnia has even received DXCC recognition without waiting for the conflict (war!) to end. How can anyone call a station from TRNC "a pirate", just because some members of the Greek community, being of course a biased party, said so?

It took a lot of effort from enthusiasts like us, and almost ten years, counting from the declaration of TRNC, to pass a law authorizing amateur radio there. I feel ashamed that some of us hams greeted them by calling them "a pirate" instead of giving them a warm welcome. Do you remember how you felt when you made your first contact? I have been personally monitoring the TRNC hams' struggle for several years, anxious to get my own temporary operating permit from there. I did, by the way, get a permit to operate as KU0J/5B4 as well.

When, almost ten years after TRNC declaration, a law authorizing amateur radio in TRNC was finally passed, the new republic was left without any ITU assigned prefix, since the Ministry of Communications and Works of he Republic of Cyprus (South) kept total control over the usage of 5B and other prefixes, previously assigned to Cyprus by the ITU. Strong political pressure from Greece prevented TRNC from being able to join the ITU. For the same reason, until now

TRNC has been officially recognized only by Turkey, Britain, USA and Japan, on the grounds that there are still some Turkish troops stationed there. The reality is that the presence is vital for protection of Turkish Cypriots, which the UN failed to do, and has nothing to do with democratically elected government or amateur radio there. Incidentally, a much higher Soviet military presence in the German Democratic Republic or Cuba did not make them ineligible by DXCC.

My goal is not to gain political or diplomatic recognition of TRNC. I believe that these issues should be left to professional politicians and kept away from our amateur radio. I am only calling for the acknowledgement of the fact of TRNC's existence for over ten years as an independent country, with its own freely elected government, constitution, opposition parties, etc., regardless of whether other governments or individuals like it or not.

The fact is, it has existed for over ten years, and now has its own amateurs like us, who deserve our recognition, and need our help. Lack of political recognition by other countries, for whatever reason, should not be an obstacle for the recognition by us hams, working hard to promote peace and friendship in the world. As a matter of fact, there is no firm guide-line in DXCC rules, saying how many countries a proposed new country needs to be recognised by diplomatically for accreditation For a long time, Russia was recognised by Mongolia only; their admission to the League of Nations took seventeen years. Then, suddenly, the whole world recognised them as a political reality, And what about our recent pile-up target, North Korea? The only Western bloc country to recognise North Korea so far is Sweden. Let us keep politics separate! We do not need QRM from amateur politicians.

The Telecommunication Administration of TRNC, as a gesture of good will, to avoid any additional problems with their southern neighbour, adopted 1B as a prefix, not used by or not assigned to any country. Several cases set a prerogative to this, such as 1A0, 1S, S0, FS, all of which are recognised by DXCC. Usage of an unofficial prefix should not be held against TRNC hams. They had no choice, besides staying off the air, which they did for ten years, and the TRNC Telecommunication Administration had, under the political circumstances, no other alternative. Now let us be realistic, unbiased, and consistent, protect our hobby from the influence of politicians including amateur ones, and make it more enjoyable by welcoming TRNC amateurs to our friendly international community. This should also include DXCC accreditation.

And, last but never least, after my recent visit to the island, and talking to many wonderful people there in their native language, I strongly feel that such recognition is well deserved.

(Ed: thanks to DX News Sheet for providing this article)

Comments on TRNC

From the UK PacketCluster Network

The DXAC Chairman, W4VQ, has apparently accepted the petioner's request to withdraw the application for the Turkish Repubic of Northern Cyprus. In recent correspondence, the original petitioner has turned over the material he submitted to another amateur. The DXAC may, therefore, receive a new petition for the TRNC. But for now, this one is dead.

If I had to guess, I would say that the chances for the TRNC ever being added under the present political circumstances are quite slim. However, experience has shown the the actions of the DXAC are difficult to predict, and one never knows what new information might surface.

73 Bill, KC1AG

3Y0PI - PETER 1SLAND EXPEDITION 1994

Peter Casier, ON6TT

How do you summarise an expedition of this size? How do you tell people about all the sleepless nights during the many months of preparation, the hundreds of faxes and telephone calls, the plans, the disappointments if yet another potential sponsor turns you down. How do you describe the despair when, one month before take-off, the Russian charter company providing the pick-up off the island, cancels their contract, and how about the tears in your eyes when during a meeting in St. Petersburg, the same people say: "OK, we will do it, We will pick you up"!

And then the expedition itself. An adventure of two months with nine people, most of which never met each other before... Travelling through 5 different continents, through 9 countries, covering 47,000 km using 15 different forms of transportation, from a Uruguayan military cargo plane to icebreakers and tanks.....

The only thing I can do is describe short subjective impressions...

The goal of the 3Y0PI expedition was to give as many people as possible a new country, from one of the most isolated and hostile places on the earth: Peter 1. At the same time, we wanted to do geological, biological and meteorological research. There have only been 4 landings before on this island, 500 km West of the Antarctic continent, at 69° S and 90° W

This in itself proves the remoteness and consequently the difficulties to surmount before executing the second helicopter landing ever on this 200 km^2 large volcanic mountain, peaking 1700m high, in the ice sea. We would be the biggest scientific expedition ever on Peter 1, in terms of number of people and of cargo. We would be the first scientific expedition ever without a support ship standing off shore. And our stay would be the longest ever on the island....

The previous recorded landing in 1987 had a courageous duo with them: LA1EE and LA2GV, handing out the first 17,000 ham contacts ever from this location. We would try to do as well as them!

After 2 years of preparation, expedition leader and team doctor Ralph-K0IR, Martin Tosseyn, our cook and I left for the Falklands in beginning of January. Antennas were erected and we made close to 6000 QSOs, as VP8BZL, awaiting the rest of the team to arrive one week later:

- WA4JQS - Tony, who had assembled a major part of the material
- KK6EK - Bob, our scientist and environmental officer
- N4GCK - Bob, a professional pilot and one of the 3 CW ops
- XE1L - Luis, architect, well known in IOTA circles and co-organiser of the XF4L DXpedition
- W6MKB - Terry, research manager at HP and how band specialist
- HB9AHL - Willy, the third CW op, previously active from Clipperton, Bouvet and Palmyra/Kingman.

On January 23, we boarded our ship, the Kapitan Khlebnikov, a Russian icebreaker converted to an Antarctic cruise ship. The Khlebnikov measures 132 m by 26 m and displaces 18,000 tons of water at a cruise speed at 15 knots. She has two helicopters on board which we would use for a safe landing on Peter 1.

After a pretty rough voyage, we approached Peter 1 on January 29. The weather was calm but very foggy. This was bad news. We had only one day to land, afterwards the ship would continue on its trip, ending up in New Zealand. The helicopter pilots would not want to fly in this dense fog. But...on the west side of the island, the deep blue sea changed to endless white; the ice sea. And the fog disappeared from the island, displaying it in all its glory: 20 km diameter with the Mount Christensen dominating the whole panorama. The sides of the mountain fall almost vertically into the sea, from three sides. In the north, a large a flat glacier run almost 4km long away from the mountain, to drop off into the sea in large chunks of 30 to 40 m high.

Now the real work started. We got all cargo upon deck while the two helicopters were prepared for take-off. Bob and Terry would land first and look for a suitable camp-site. With a loud roaring noise, the chopper lifted slowly, meter by meter and for a while, kept hanging behind the ship, as to give its passengers a last long look at the Khlebnikov. Suddenly, she took a sharp right turn and took off towards the island. After half an hour, Terry called in on the portable VHF set that they had landed safely and found a good spot for us to put up camp on the glacier. It took four hours, and about twenty helicopter flights before all our material was transported, It is quite difficult to describe the emotions going through our minds as we got onto the last helicopter flight, while the Khlebnikov crew and the other passengers waved us cheerfully good-bye. The second helicopter, carrying a cargo net, flew next to us to the island. As in a dream we flew, at a height of about 500m towards the edge of the glacier, circled over the camp and landed in between the scattered crates. As we jumped out of the helicopter, we realised that our group finally succeeded in doing what many others did not think was possible: the second helicopter landing ever on the island with the biggest cargo ever...

While we shook hands and opened a bottle of champagne, the helicopter took off. The Khlebnikov, our last link to the civilised world, would wait off the coast until our first tent was erected. It was quiet, very quiet on the glacier. The only sounds were the wind, the soft sound of people talking and walking around in the snow and the sizzling sound of the ice sea. It was 10:00pm and the sun sent under very slowly, it would never become totally dark though. Here we were, in between about 150 crates, fuel barrels and propane tanks, on the most wanted DXCC country.

All material stayed where it was landed and we erected our first-and-biggest-tent: our sleeping quarters. It measured 8m x 4m and had the same construction as the kitchen tent (4m x 4m) and the two radio tents (2.5m x 2.5m): first a frame of wooden poles was nailed down. The space between the wood was filled with insulation material. The whole floor was covered with one plastic sheet and a wooden floor was nailed on top. On the edge of the floor, we fixed a metal frame which held the metal circular tube structure, which formed the top and sides of the tent. Over these tubes, we hung two layers of thick insulated plastic. All was fixed into the snow and ice with long stakes and snow anchors. By 02:00 in the morning, our first tent was ready. While, with a funny feeling in our throat, we saw the Khlebnikov slowly disappearing, we put our bunks together and got into the tent to spend the night.

It was quite a hassle to get our polar clothes off. This is not something you can do in five minutes: basically the clothing consisted of three layers: the thin capilene underwear took up the sweat from your body and passed it on to the next layer: two 'fleeces' thick but very warm sweaters, which were

your heat-layer. Fleeces pass the sweat on to the third and outer layer: Gortex jackets and pants. 'Gortex' is a special material which is a 100% water and wind proof, but it lets sweat go through. Keeping the sweat from your body is very important. If you sweat and your clothing gets wet inside, your body temperature drops very fast...A polartec cap, Gortex gloves, ski goggles and sturdy boots are the finishing touches to your outfit.

We stripped to our underwear and got into our thick polar sleeping bags.

The next day was 'tent day', we set up all shelters, installed the generators, run electrical wires to all tents and opened the rest of the crates. The wind blew a bit stronger than the day before and light snow floated down from the overcast sky. Tony found out that his two Onan generators had apparently been stored upside down on the ship, and the oil had run into the engines. He had trouble starting them. The two Hondas worked fine. We hooked up a radio in the kitchen and installed a taped dipole, to call the Khebnikov and announce that we were alright. Afterwards we switched to 14.195 and heard quite some people exchanging comments on our expedition and wandering when we would come on the air. The world was ready for us, but we were not ready yet. While in the evening, enjoying warm soup and crackers, Martin, our cook bad some bad news for us: apparently the crate with kitchen material was opened on the ship and most of the kitchen tools were stolen. He was left with one pot to melt snow, one pan, one big spoon and one thermos flask. No sign of our forks, knifes, spoons, plastic plates and cups, pots and pans or soap. Luckily everybody had some spare material: army knifes and a couple of mugs, Bob even had a small pot and pan and a set of four forks/knifes/spoons....Martin would have to be very creative in the next three weeks, preparing food for nine people with such limited means.

The third day came up. This was the 'antenna' day. The sky was clear but it was very cold. We had to work with all our clothes on. You could work for a couple of minutes without gloves but then your hands were so cold that you had no feeling in them anymore. We were getting well organised, performing multiple tasks at the same time: A couple of people installed the gear in the radio tents, two others repaired the generators and all others put together the antennas. The antenna assembly went very fast, they were pre-assembled at Tony's home and taken apart again. All pieces were well marked. By late afternoon, a whole surface was filled with antennas laying around:

- Cushcraft monoband yagis for 15, 20 and 40m
- Two lowband verticals and an R5
- Two Cushcraft triband yagis for 10-15-20 and one triband yagi for 12-17-30

The tripods, forming the base of the antenna towers were installed and put in one line, facing N-NE, towards States and Europe. In this way, we would minimise the interference between the stations, while taking maximum advantage of the side rejection. Coaxes were laid out, guy wires fixed, poles erected,.... It was very late in the evening and extremely cold while we put up the last antenna. While enjoying our first hot evening meal on the island, we listened in on 14.195 and heard that 'the natives were getting very restless'. People were commenting what could have happened to us and rumours started flying around. It was very amusing. But again, we did not reply to anything. They had to wait, we were not ready yet.

February 1st came. The fourth day on the island. Ralph decided not to get onto the air before everything was set up. Afterwards this turned out to be a very good decision. Hitting the bands with four stations at one time would spread the pileups and get people less tense than when they had to get through one pileup of one station, while others would have been busy still installing their stuff. Also this strategy allowed us to secure all shelters, cover all equipment and make sure all was up and running 100%, so we could concentrate on the pileups and not worry about anything else. We installed the satellite station and checked all antennas and equipment.

"Ralph, we are ready!" Ralph went to the SSB tent, switched to 14.195 and called: CQ from 3Y0PI 3Y0PI, QRZ....There was hesitation, but finally an Italian (The first contact was a European, I was proud!) called in. We exchanged reports and then the band exploded. Luis took over, and started the first pileups. I sat at the table next to him and went on 21.295: "CQ from 3Y0PI, 3Y0PI, listening 300 to 310" Ralph and Willy came on two more bands in CW and.... 3Y0PI had started. From now on it would be radio, and nothing else but radio. At least, that's what we thought. Little did we know....

During the first 50 hours from the operation, we made 20,000 QSOs. Everybody was amazed how smooth things run. The weather was fine, HF conditions were good. By the end of the second day, we held a team meeting in the kitchen tent. Ralph and I had assembled quite some information from our pilot stations, who got feedback from the DX community on how our operation was appreciated. We also kept statistics on the openings per continent and per band. From all this data, it was clear that we should give even more priority to Europe. European signals were covered by the US, and openings to the old continent were much shorter than to Stateside. At the same time, some pileup techniques were fine-tuned.

But things can change fast in the Antarctic. In the evening of the fourth day, I was working Stateside on 20m when Ralph unzipped the door flaps of the SSB tent. While he put his head through the door, the wind shook the flaps violently and blew snow into the tent. "Peter, come and have a look, we have problems". I pulled on my jacket, hat, gloves and ski goggles and struggled outside. In a few hours time, the calm weather had turned into 80 km/h winds, it was bitter cold. The wind chased the dusts now up in the air and it was hard to see anything. "We've lost the Battlecreek", Ralph shouted above the noise of the wind, "and we have problems with the generators". We fought our way against the wind to the heap of crates and plastic tarps we put around the poles to protect the generators. The tarps were torn to pieces, and the generators were completely covered. "Completely", meaning that you can only see snow, with a small hole, where the exhaust pipe was blowing out hot air. We started digging out the generators and rebuilding the generator shelters but the faster we dug, the faster the wind covered the generators again. There was no way we could win this battle. In fear of the generators overheating under the snow, there was no other option but to close down the stations, wrap up the generators in tarps, hope that the storm would go by quickly, and go to bed early.

The next morning, the storm was calming down. The wind had blown the dust snow through small holes in the corners of the tent, and some of us woke up with a few centimetres of snow on their sleeping bags. The zippers from the door flaps were frozen, so it took us an hour before we got out of the tent, after digging our way through the heap of snow in front of the tent, that is....

The sight of the camp was amazing. We did not see the generators anymore, most of the crates, gas barrels and propane bottles had disappeared under the snow too. Fortunately only the Battlecreek went down. The SSB triband yagi had turned semi-vertical, but it looked OK. Everybody woke up and started digging out the material. The generators were in pretty bad shape. Not only had the wind blown the snow into the tarp covers, the generators were turned into one block of ice. With hammers and screwdrivers, we started to knock off the ice. One of the Honda's started immediately, so we could use hairdryers and heat lamps to melt the ice off the other generators. Unfortunately, one of the Onans spit out black smoke: the alternator was burnt, but we had the three others running. While little by little, some people were succeeding in getting all of the equipment above the snow again, we rewired the SSB tent to run with both amplifiers from one Honda, and that worked great. Back to 'work', back to the pile-ups. Bob put out his head from the CW tent, and shouted "there is something wrong, I cannot hear anything over here" Luis come back from the SSB tent and shook his head. "The bands are dead, totally dead". A major solar flare had killed most bands....

Though the next day, we had some propagation again, the bad HF conditions would last until the last minute of the operation. Our rates were getting pretty low. Tony was unfortunate too. The plastic crate with the satellite and RTTY gear was obviously dropped from a crane or something, as all equipment was heavily damaged. He got to repair the satellite radio, but it died after two days. One RTTY modem worked more or less, after some interventions, but to switch between send and receive - and vice versa - Tony had to reset the modem. Imagine running RTTY pileups in that way:

RYRYRY CQ DE 3Y0PI 3Y0PI .....<RESET> 'DE AA1BB AA1BB <RESET> 'AA1BB AA1BB 599 599' <RESET> 'DE AA1BB 599 599 <RESET>. It did not seem fun to me....

And the bad weather did not stop. Storm after storm after storm hit us. one more violent than the other, some lasted a couple of hours, some kept on blowing for 4 hours in a row. But we did not give up. If you were not working the pileups, or sleeping, you had to work outside. We kept on digging the crates and generators out of the snow. The generators especially were of major concern. If they gave up, we were finished. It was amazing how the heap of crates, gas barrels, tarps and pieces of wood that we put around the generators , grew higher and higher. But still, the snow would keep on blowing on top of the generators. Even worse, the engines would produce so much heat that they would melt the snow underneath their base, and kind of dig a hole under them, so they were sinking lower and lower. Sometimes it was almost a mountaineering task to climb over or between the crates and then 'descent' into the 'generator pit' in order to refill them. The second Onan generator kept on losing parts. The muffler broke off and every day we would find more nuts and bolts which had fallen off. We used to make jokes about it: "What are the minimum parts that an Onan needs to keep on running?". But it kept on running, although it vibrated violently on its base and kept on moving towards the Honda next to it. We gathered the Onan was male and the Honda was female, so they were obviously 'attracted' to each other.

And Martin, our cook, he kept on cooking. Melting snow, preparing coffee, cleaning dishes, and shaking his head: "You guys must be totally nuts, all this trouble, just to make radio contact. Tango Tango, Zulu Zulu, Five Nine, spread out guys". We always answered with a smile. What else could

we say? He was right, we are crazy. Each time we would come into the kitchen, again completely covered with snow, he would look at us and say 'Tango Tango, Five Nine'.....Martin was a great help. Imagine that, without him, after a radio session and some hours of snow digging, we would have to first melt snow, then heat the water, and start preparing our dried food... That would have taken hours and hours.....

Slowly, the end of the expedition started to come into sight. John ON4UN had contact with our pickup ship, the Akademik Fedorov, a Russian icebreaker and the biggest research vessel in the Antarctic. They had asked us to be ready for evacuation from the island by the evening of February 16th. So gradually, we were taking down antennas and stripping the tents, while still working pileups though. Digging out the chicken wire and radials forming the ground system for the two low band verticals, was a major effort. In the past weeks, about one meter of snow and a 10 cm thick ice layer had formed on top of it. We needed about 24 man-hours to make each vertical ready to be taken down...By the evening of Feb. 16, we had radio contact with Sergej, the radio officer from the Fedorov. From that moment on, we would have an hourly sked with him, day and night. Sergej asked to be ready for the evacuation by the next morning. We worked until late in the evening crating all equipment breaking down the CW and the sleeping tent, and dragging everything to our 'airport', a small landing field for the helicopter we had marked with stakes and flags. Our personal gear was put in the SSB tent. That night, Bob and Tony slept on top of those bags and suitcases while the rest of us slept in the kitchen tent. Actually, 'sleeping' was not the right work...With seven people, we laid on the ground or on the food crates, or tried to find a good position in a chair. Ralph was the lucky one, he could sleep on the table, hi. Willy and I kept watch, and had an hourly sked with the Fedorov, and went out to refill the last running generator every two hours.

The next morning it was very foggy. The helicopter pilots hesitated to get airborne. Fortunately during the afternoon, it cleared up a little bit and they landed their large Mil- 8 machine. We loaded about 3 tons of equipment as fast as possible. Martin and Willy got on board too. Being Europeans, they spoke several languages and could talk to the ship's crew in case of something going wrong. And it went wrong. The fog came in again, and yet another storm was building up. No more helicopters that day, and another night in the kitchen tent.

On the 18th the weather was still bad, and the pilots did not even attempt to land a helicopter that day. Nevertheless, we were in permanent 'stand-by ' mode. Knowing how the weather could change from hour to hour, we had to continuously dig out all equipment stacked near the landing site. If the helicopter would come in, we would not have time to start digging then, we had to be ready.... The next day, without any warning, the helicopter landed again, taking yet another load aboard. This time, Luis, Ralph and Terry went to the ship, Ralph had to negotiate with the captain as the latter was getting a bit nervous. We had paid a fixed amount of money for the pickup, but the Fedorov is costing $27,000 per day to run, so the Russians were starting to lose money on this operation.

On Feb. 20 the helicopter pilots were prepared to take risks and after five flights, all equipment was of the island except our 'survival gear': the last generator, the last dipole, some food crates, one bottle of propane, one heater and the kitchen tent. Once more the helicopter came in, and the decision had to be made: "Will we attempt to break down our last shelter?" If a storm would come up and the helicopter would leave, we would be in major problems. The helicopter pilot shut off his engines to assure us he would not leave without us. In twenty minutes - I still do not know how we did it - we dismantled our last shelter and got onto the heli. We had taken everything off the island, including our human waste.

With a sad feeling, we slowly flew over the place where once our camp was set up. We could still see the traces of where the tents were, the imprints of the barrels, and the big heaps of snow, traces of the 'digging efforts'. The whole glacier was 'virgin white' again. We were proud that we did not leave any waste behind. We left the island as we found it.

Our foot prints in the snow were the only evidence of the longest expedition on this forgotten piece of the world....

And yet, our adventure was not ended yet. After three days, we arrived at King George. Once again the weather was bad, and our team had to be brought ashore over two days. Our chartered Hercules plane did not come for another four days, due to the low clouds, so we had plenty of time to make another 1000 QSO's as 4KIF, VP8CBE and 4K1/XE1L....Meanwhile we stayed at the Russian Antarctic base of Bellingshausen, which is a story in its own, hi hi!

On Feb. 26 we finally got 'our' Hercules flight to Punta Arenas, where we 'robbed' a local restaurant and held a 'sleep-in' at a hotel. The next day, about 16 hours after we had left the Antarctic, we were queuing at the luggage transport belt in Santiago, still dressed in our polar gear, with our big boots, between girls in miniskirts and T-shirts, in a heat of +30C. It was quite a comic sight!

The same evening the team parted, each making his own way towards our homes in Mexico, California, Michigan, Kentucky, Minnesota, Switzerland and.. Belgium.

3Y0PI-62,000 QSO's VP8BZL-6000 QSOs, VPBZL/MM-1000 QSOs. 4KIF, VP8CBE, 4K1/XE1L 1000 QSO's, all is a memory now.

For some, but not for us! The work still goes on. Contracts with the sponsors have to be closed. The QSL cards have to be printed and shipped. Our cargo will arrive by ship in the harbour of Antwerp, this needs to be re-crated and sent to the US. Articles are to be written and presentations to be done. For us, it will be another year before 3Y0PI is over.

We hope you enjoyed the expedition as much as we did. We thank all of you for your support!

Note: the total cost of this expedition is about $300,000 - DM 525,000. To help us cover the costs of this expedition, KK6EK is writing a book about the whole adventure. It will be published by end of April, The profits go to the team. By the same time frame, the team will have the video ready, and souvenir coffee cups with the 3Y0PI logo will be sold. To wrap up this expedition in the quality it was run, QSL cards will come out very fast. Expect them around end of April too!

Thank you for sharing this experience with us.

For the 'Three Yopi team', ON6TT - Peter

3Y0PI VIDEO TAPE AVAILABLE NOW!

There will be two different video tapes covering the 3Y0PI operation, one made in the US, and one made in Europe. Both will be sold in Europe.

The European tape is available now. It is a professional quality VHS PAL tape of 40 minutes, edited in a video studio. The tape features great images of the whole operation, dubbed with superb music and English narration. You worked 3Y and wondered "how it was the other side?" Now you can share the feeling of being in the middle of an Antarctic blizzard, and... working the pileups from the #1 most wanted DXCC country! The sale of the video will also help the operators to cover the huge expenses to put 3Y on the air.

The European tape is available through ON6TT, who made the tape:

Peter Casier, P.O. Box 1, B-9090 Melle, Belgium. It costs $35, or equivalent in local currency. PLEASE NO CHEQUES except Eurocheques, which are accepted only with your Eurochequecard number on the back, and written out for the amount of Bef 1200 (Bef = Belgian Francs).

ONE QTH, TWO COUNTRIES, A DXPEDITION TO WALVIS BAY

(Don Field, G3XTT)

Although some CDXC members would not think in terms of DXpeditioning, for fear they might miss some rare DX while away, the majority of us probably harbour dreams of being rare DX. Over the years I have had the opportunity to operate from both GJ and GU, as well as from a number of relatively rare IOTA spots. However, none of these could really be classified as serious DXpeditioning. At the same time, with family commitments and a full-time job, I have never felt able to offer myself for a VK9M or 3Y0 type of trip. Some day maybe ...

The nearest I came to going on a DXpedition was two years ago when Chris, ZS6EZ, who I have corresponded with since the early 80's, asked me to join him on a trip to Penguin Island. Unfortunately this would have taken place over the Christmas/New Year holiday, which would hardly have gone down well on the domestic front so I had to decline. Then late last year Chris told me he was hoping to put on an operation from Walvis Bay before it ceased to exist as a separate country, and was hoping that this time I would be able to join him. The dates were still very open and in the end I had all of about ten days notice that the operation would actually go ahead in the last week of February. This was definitely the last possible chance to activate ZS9, as Walvis Bay was due to be formally handed over to Namibia on 28th February. The flip side was that this would enable us to operate briefly under a V5 callsign as well without ever have to move QTH!

All this seemed like too good an opportunity to miss. ZS9, and even V5, were rare enough to give me some useful DXpedition experience, but accessible enough that I would be away from home for less than two weeks. Some rapid negotiations at home and at work enabled me to clear my diary and get the necessary permissions, while a call to Thomas Cook revealed that the World's Favourite Airline had a special offer to Johannesburg during March, which made the trip rather more affordable than I had anticipated.

The critical path appeared to be licensing. Would it really be possible to get reciprocal licences for both ZS and V5 in the space of a week? Fortunately Chris has good contacts in the licensing departments in both countries, developed over many years, and was assured that if I was able to FAX out copies of my UK licence and passport details there should be no problem. At this stage I was running out of excuses; it looked as though I really was on my way. The only complication was that John G3WGV and I were committed to an ARRL CW Contest effort from Jersey on 19/20th February, travelling back late on the Monday, and I would be flying out to Johannesburg on the Tuesday night, which didn't leave much time for contingencies.

A word about Walvis Bay and Namibia at this stage. Walvis (Whale Fish) Bay is one of the few natural harbours along that stretch of coast and has been used as a fishing port since the 19th century. There is no other reason why anyone in their right mind would build a town right in the middle of one of the world's most arid deserts! The early settlers came under occasional attack from natives, and asked the British Government for protection. Early this century, when the Union of South Africa came into being, the British government handed the administration and protection of Walvis Bay over to the South Africans, where it has remained ever since. After the First World War, Germany was stripped of its overseas possessions, which included South West Africa, and South Africa was asked to

administer SWA as well. However, although Walvis Bay is surrounded on three sides by SWA (and by the Atlantic Ocean on the fourth side), for most of the subsequent period SWA and Walvis Bay were administered quite separately by South Africa. When SWA gained its independence in the 80's and became Namibia, this is no way affected the status of Walvis Bay, which continued to be run as an offshoot of Cape Province.

Nevertheless, the Namibians eyed Walvis Bay with interest. Many of their imports and exports were going through Walvis Bay, and the Walvis Bay economy, while small by South African standards, was worth about 10% of Namibia's economy (Walvis Bay has a population of about 25,000. Namibia has a population of about 1 million, but many of them at subsistence level). To South Africa, with all the political turmoil at home, the cost and effort of administering Walvis Bay (and, to a much lesser extent, the Penguin Islands) was less and less justifiable, and they eventually agreed to hand over the territories to Namibia.

Incidentally, although that handover has now taken place, there still remain some outstanding issues about ownership of assets, particularly telecommunications and power assets which the Namibians believe should now be theirs but which were privately owned (as in the UK, telecomms and power generation in South Africa are privatised). However, there is nothing to prevent the ARRL deleting ZS9 and ZS0 from the countries list. Indeed, Ian Sutherland, V51C (ex-ZS9A) who we visited while we were there, told us that the South African licensing people had written to all holders of ZS9 licences, telling them that as from 28th February their ZS9 licences would no longer be valid and they would have to take out V5 licences.

So it was I made my first trip south of the equator, and was met at Jan Smuts airport by Chris ZS6EZ. Incidentally, although I had been corresponding with Chris for so long, we had only once met in person, during a brief business trip to the UK which Chris had made last year. However, Chris has twice hosted Dennis G3MXJ in recent years (Dennis operated as ZS6FOC to great effect in the FOC Marathon from Chris's station), and provided significant assistance to G3TXF G3SXW and G4FAM during their foray to Swaziland.

On the way to Pretoria from the airport we passed ZS6DN's impressive station. It is on a hillside overlooking the motorway and I counted at least 15 towers showing above the treeline. The high towers support vee-beams, the lower towers support a multitude of Yagis. It's a pity he isn't more active.

I will spare you the rest of the travelogue in these pages as CDXC is a DX-oriented club. I am writing the trip up for Ham Radio Today, so you can buy a copy of that when it appears if you want a bit more of the non-radio side of the visit. Suffice to say that after a day of packing gear and antennas, and a 25-hour, 1400 mile drive (towing an 18ft trailer with all the antenna hardware), with a brief stop in Windhoek to collect my V5 licence (Guest Licence No.8 - guess there haven't been too many visiting hams in Namibia since independence), we arrived late on the Thursday evening in Walvis Bay.

The most difficult problem which Chris had faced in arranging the trip had been finding accommodation in ZS9. During a previous ZS9Z effort he had hired an empty house in town, but with lots of visiting dignitaries and hangers-on expected for the "independence" celebrations accommodation was at a premium. Eventually we settled for the hire of a caravan (at an extortionate daily rate) in a campsite outside town. In the event this proved to be a good idea. The campsite was

not too busy, and there was plenty of open space in which to erect our antennas. Each of the pitches had its own electricity supply, so power was no problem.

The first night we managed to erect the Battle Creek special (hopefully, by now, everyone knows what one of these is - this particular one has been used at 8Q7AH and 3Y5X, but in recent years has been on long-term loan to ZS6EZ and has been used from 3DA0, 7P8, V5, ZS9 and ZS0). Unfortunately the SWR was high on 160, and we were too tired to try and find the problem, but all was well on 80 and 40, so I elected to operate through the night on those bands while Chris caught up on his sleep as he had done the bulk of the driving. It turned out to be an excellent night on the LF bands, the only night of our expedition when the QRN was almost non-existent. Pity that 160 was out. Anyway, it meant a good start, with something like 700 LF QSOs in the log by the time Chris appeared with breakfast.

Then it was my turn to sleep while Chris started putting together the HF antennas (an A4S with 40m extension and an A3WS for 12/17) and towers (two Rohn 40ft towers which are also veterans of several expeditions). Chris's philosophy, which I wholeheartedly endorse, is to make an effort to put out a big signal on DXpeditions, even if it takes some time to get everything set up. The high QSOs rates later on more than compensate for the time lost, and give even the most modestly equipped DXers a chance to make a QSO.

By evening we had everything assembled, and recruited some local help to walk the towers into the upright position. Chris then did his steeplejack impression, putting up the A4S in the dark (or, at least, by the lights of the campsite), becoming quite an attraction for a number of the campsite inhabitants who clearly thought we were totally mad. During the day we had also fixed the problem with the Battle Creek Special - the toroid transformer which is used to achieve a match on 160m is supported in its box only by the soldered joints which attach the winding to the co-ax connectors. The vibration of the journey had led to fatigue failure of the joints - clearly the one weak point in what is otherwise a very well put together antenna.

It was time for another night on the LF bands, followed by installing the A3WS atop its tower as soon as 40m had died after dawn, so that we were all set to roll (remember, it is now Saturday morning, and we want to be able to operate round the clock during the weekend to satisfy the demand from those of the waiting masses who have to work for a living during the week).

I quickly fired up on 17m CW working Europe while Chris caught the tail end of the long-path opening to Japan on 20 CW, and we were away. Or so we thought. After a few hours of the biggest pile-ups I had ever experienced (which is, after all, what I had come for), the power went off! It turned out that there was a municipal strike, and power was off to the whole of Walvis Bay. The dispute was about pay and pensions. The Namibians had offered to take on all the municipal employees, but at about half the wages that they had been earning when under South African jurisdiction. Apparently there were some fairly heated demonstrations in Walvis Bay town itself; just as well we were a few miles outside. A radio expedition without power is a bit of a dead loss and after a couple of hours we were starting to consider where we might beg, borrow or steal a generator, but fortunately at that stage the power came back on and remained with us for the rest of the expedition.

From this point on we kept at least one station on the air the whole time until midnight local on the Monday (28th Feb)

when the handover officially took place. Only then we did take a two hour break before restarting as V51Z at midnight GMT (so as not to confuse the ARRL who only deal in GMT days). We had taken two complete stations - my IC-735, Chris's IC-735 and TL-922, and an FL-2100 which had been left with Chris by G3TXF et al. In practice there were only a few occasions when we ran two bands simultaneously. Whoever was not operating the main station tended to want to sleep, eat or have a swim in the sea. I only hope the DX community will forgive us such a selfish attitude! Nevertheless, we were able to put over 3,500 QSOs a day into the log between us, despite making an effort to work 160 and RTTY, where the rates were much lower than on the other bands and modes. We stuck to our pre-announced plan to major on the WARC bands, LF and RTTY, on the basis that anyone who had already worked ZS9 had probably done so on 10, 15 or 20 and would be looking out for other bands and modes, and anyone who still needed ZS9 would be happy with a QSO on any band.

On this basis we decided to stick to 12 metres whenever it was open, to work it dry and give even the smallest guns a QSO, before turning to the other bands. To our astonishment it never did run dry and the pile-ups on there were quite large even to the end. We made several thousand QSOs on 12 (and a whole lot more on 17), and in one 5-hour session alone Chris made about 1100 QSOs on 12m SSB. Moving to 12m from 17m, we could have an instant pile-up following a single "QRZ de ZS9Z?". It would be interesting to know whether Baldur and friends on ZS0 had the same experience. ZS0 is probably rarer than ZS9, but as far as we could tell their signals were nowhere near as strong as ours on any band - we were frequently asked what had happened to them. We stuck to the pre-announced operating frequencies as closely as possible. G3TXF had obviously been taking note and was lying in wait to be our very first 12m QSO.

By the way, I haven't mentioned 30m. For this band we strung an inverted-Vee dipole at about the 25ft level on one of the towers and found that we could easily work all continents (during the evening JA, Europe and North America would all be loud together), even running barefoot. A remarkable band!

For me the highlights of the trip were the sessions on 160m. We found 160m tough going over the weekend as the CQ WW 160m Phone contest was running. We were hearing some very loud signals, especially from the US, but couldn't raise any of them, presumably due to QRM in the States. I did manage an SSB QSO with EA8PP who sounded as though he had just fallen off his operating chair when he finally figured out who was calling him! Chris managed some CW QSOs through the contest QRM, but it was hard going.

The night after the contest I went on 160 at midnight but, although I gather we were being heard quite well in Europe and North America, the noise level at our location was high and I was only able to work ZD8M and a very scratchy QSO with KA1PE. Three hours later it was a different matter. Our local noise level was down to about S7 and I was able to work about 80 stations over a two hour period, throughout North America plus a handful of Europeans. Interestingly I observed exactly the same phenomenon that Roger G3SXW had noted from ZD9 - there were never more than two or three stations audible at any one time (though I gather, subsequently, that the pile-up when heard from the European and North American ends was quite horrendous!). Apologies to those of you who were calling and didn't make it - I worked everybody who I could hear (apart from one K5 who clearly was calling blind and not hearing me, and an SM5, possibly

SM5EDX, who disappeared back into the noise before I could pull his call through). Interestingly, GJ3YHU, who has a very good location, was hearing me throughout most of the opening, and tells me that a number of Europeans were calling during my transmissions, so I guess copy at the European end was not always easy. However, I have heard a tape recording made by John G3PQA (one of only two Europeans to work us as both ZS9Z and V51Z on 160) during which we were absolutely Q5, but then John does have a Beverage for receiving. The story repeated itself in much the same way for the next two nights, when we were signing V51Z, and we worked another hundred or so stations on 160.

Throughout the operation we logged on paper, a rather novel experience for me! In practice this worked quite well. Chris has designed a log sheet which he used on previous expeditions, with 150 QSOs per sheet, which means that each sheet lasts for about an hour when running rate. Chris will enter them on computer in due course for QSLing purposes. One of the main reasons for taking this approach was that neither Chris nor I have a laptop PC. I had been offered the loan of one by a CDXC member, but didn't want the responsibility of taking care of someone else's expensive machine during the trip. On RTTY we used an aged Tono terminal and I have to say I was very impressed! The filters in it put those in my PK-232 to shame, and we were able to pull calls out of the RTTY pile-up with ease and run at 60 an hour or better.

As far as the general operating was concerned, I really learned a lot from my first serious DXpedition. Hearing what the pile-up sounds like at the sharp end certainly puts things into perspective, and also makes a nonsense of a lot of the complaints which I have heard from the armchair DX chasers over the years. Everybody thinks they should be one of the first into the log, but few realise they they are just one of hundreds calling. The first time we went on 12m SSB the S meter sat at S9+ over 10kHz or more of the band due to the sheer wall of signals calling us. It would probably have taken us an hour or more to work that lot, even if no one else had joined the pile-up from then on.

I suppose every DXpeditioner develops a favourite modus operandi as far as handling the pile-ups is concerned. I know I made a number of mistakes, especially early on. However, I quickly found that I preferred to stay on one listen frequency for as long as possible until the pile-up became too big and then I would move up the band slightly or announce a new listen frequency (so that those who let go of the ptt occasionally and listen would have an advantage). By tuning as little as possible I could usually pull out a complete call first time (hell and damnation to those of you who insist on using partial calls ...), which saves time as the calling station need then only send a signal report on the next over. I also found that once a rhythm is established people will not call interminably because they realise there is no point. Again, though, woe to the US station who called continuously on CW - it took me some time to realise that he was using full break-in and never was going to leave a break in his transmission. This is something that John G3WGV had happen to him on Mellish - I do hope it doesn't become prevalent. I didn't find the behaviour of the European stations in the pile-ups noticeably worse than that of any other stations, despite having feared the worst. Certainly if you let things slip it is easy to lose control, but if you keep the rhythm going and are clear in your instructions there are very few problems, especially on CW. I was particularly impressed one morning when there was an opening to JA on 12 metres. The JAs were much weaker than the Europeans, but rather than have the Europeans wait for an indefinite period I

decided to work the two continents alternately, working ten stations from each at a time. I kept this up for about an hour and the only station to break ranks was a GW who called time and again when I was listening for JA. Sorry OM, but if I had worked you that would have been an open invitation to the rest to break ranks ... Unfortunately I never heard him through the European pile-up, so he never did make the QSO.

I have to say, many of the UK stations are very weak indeed. The loud ones were those you would expect, but this included people like Rupert, G4XRV, who has a multiband vertical and John, G3WGV, who uses a dipole and no linear on the WARC bands. Many of the other UK stations were 20dB or more down on these guys. How is it possible to be 20dB down on 100 watts and a dipole? I don't know, but it must take quite a lot of effort. This phenomenon was much less noticeable with other countries; maybe UK signals get absorbed while crossing the English Channel?

We didn't try so hard on our final day, as V51Z. V5 will continue to be active on the bands, whereas for ZS9 it was a last chance. So we went into town and visited V51C (ZS9A), took some pictures, had a look at the dunes (the Walvis Bay area has the highest sand dunes in the world), and noted the Namibian soldiers everywhere. They were there to make a point - the following day we followed a convoy of them on the way back to Windhoek. Finally we went back to camp and took down the HF antennas and towers, leaving just the Battle Creek Special and the 30m dipole for our last night on the air. I operated throughout the final night, while Chris got some much needed rest for the journey back to ZS6.

Back in Pretoria I had organised my itinerary so that I had three days for sightseeing before travelling home. Chris had to be at work to prepare for a business trip to Europe, but his parents were extremely hospitable, even to the extent of lending me one of their cars so that I could see the sights. Chris and I also had dinner one evening with Hal, ZS6WB, a long-time resident of South Africa and well-known to 6m enthusiasts, though Hal has operated from many rare spots himself over the years, and is an American by birth (he recalls selling radio parts to K8MFO's father many years ago when he was a rep. for one of the ham radio suppliers). Hal and I also went off to Johannesburg on my last day, to go down a goldmine.

I was also able, briefly, to operate Chris's station in the ARRL Phone Contest, making just over 1,000 QSOs. He has probably the most competitive contest station in Zone 38 (just look at how many Zone 38 records he holds), with two towers, one supporting a 4 over 4 M-squared stack on 10 and a 4-element M-squared on 15, with the other supporting a Hy-Gain 205BA for 20 and Hy-Gain 402BA for 40. The first tower is shunt-fed on 80 and 160. On 10 metres I felt like king of the band, and a number of stations I worked said I was the only signal audible on the band (Chris has a hill to the south of him, which made Peter 1st a difficult one, but it slopes away to the North and, of course, everything from Japan through Europe to North America is within 45 degrees either side of North). Several CDXC members called me on 10 to say hello, which was fine by me as I wasn't taking the contest too seriously. On 20 life was much tougher. Even with the five elements I had difficulty drawing attention to myself, as most of the American stations were obviously beaming towards Europe. Thank goodness for the US Cluster network, or I might have been ploughing a very lonely furrow indeed. 40 played quite well from there, but 80 was very hard work indeed, and topband a complete write-off. ZS6 is, of course, well to

the south and well inland of ZS9, and it showed.

By the way, the QSLs didn't take long to start arriving. The first was from G4RJ and arrived in Pretoria the day after we returned from ZS9.

All in all a great experience. Now, where do we go next?

Commonwealth Contest 1994

Bob Whelan
G3PJT/VP9 Bermuda

Last year we spent 5-6 days in Bermuda and I thought at the time that it would be an idea to return this year to operate the Commonwealth Contest. Luckily I was able to manage to spend a 10 day holiday this year bridging the Commonwealth Contest weekend. Although I had originally planned to take the Icom 735 in the event I was able to use the station of Allan Davidson, VP9AD. This made a big difference as I was able to use good antennas from an excellent site overlooking most of Bermuda, Hamilton Harbour and the city itself, a clear take off in practically all directions.

In the planning stage I used MINIPROP to decide on the operating approach. It was clear that 10 & 15 were good possibilities but the openings to UK and VK were likely to be rather chancy, and were going to be difficult to spot. I agreed with Allan therefore that a good antenna for 40 would be a necessity and he agreed to put up his 2 element Yagi. For 20 & 15 I used 4 & 3 el monobanders on one tower, for 10 a 3 el Yagi on a separate tower and for 80, a dipole. None of these were more than 30' high as the winds were too high to allow the towers to be cranked up to full height. The location is however about 100-150' above the harbour so the take off is good.

I used a TS940 for 40,20 and 15 and a separate TS930 for monitoring 80 and 10. I took my laptop and used SD for logging both for the contest and for casual non-contest operations. I was unable to get a VP9 call or even arrange to use the VP9 prefix first. I was therefore stuck with the rather cumbersome G3PJT/VP9. At Allan's suggestion I programmed 'VP9' into the keyer and this seemed to at least produce a 'QRZ VP9' in busy pileups and enabled me to then send the full call. Taking the laptop, the memory keyer and my own paddle I had a human interface I knew!

I had a couple of practice sessions on the Thursday and Friday before the contest. The Friday one allowed me to try out 40m. I found that the band opened to UK earlier than I expected. Also that I had a severe but intermittent noise problem. This caused me to close down several times, apologies to those calling, but the noise was S9 and I couldn't hear anyone. I gather this caused some confusion in Europe, but there really was little I could do. I concluded that as it was raining heavily it might be a faulty insulator on the overhead power lines and hoped for a dry weekend. In the event it was and the noise did not recur.

However these short tests showed that I would have a problem with non-contest stations calling me. VP9 on CW is not rare but at least it is unusual, and a lot of people are trying for the Bermuda Award. I therefore tried to work non-contest countries during the practice sessions. However a lot of non-Commonwealth people thought they were helping me by calling during the contest. The start of the contest is at 8 am local time so the HF bands are only just opening. I therefore decided to adopt a strategy of finding the best run band at anytime and only making short trips to the other HF/LF bands for bonuses. I decided beforehand that I would probably spend most time on 20 and 40 and in the event this

was the case. I had several good sessions on 20 and 40. Especially in the first few hours. I had analysed my 1993 log and the final results from last year and set up benchmarks against the leading stations, VE3EJ, 9H1EL etc. and a Q rate of between 40-60 hr at least for the first 12 hours. I therefore tried to keep track of Tim (G4VXE at VE3EJ) for most of the contest. In the event I managed to keep up the Q rate above my benchmark until past the halfway stage, with short bursts of 80-100/hour. The flat spot was 3-5 am sunday when the rate dropped to less than 7/hour. If I spent time spotting bonuses then I would not let the rate drop below the minimum without going back to the run band. If the rate on the 'run' band is very much higher than the rate on the 'bonus' band then you can't spend very much time on the bonus band.

However it is necessary to spend some time to find bonus contacts. Such is the dilemma of the Commonwealth Contest. We shall see whether this tactic was correct. In the event I did not work many stations on either 15 or 10. Only 4 stations made it on all 5 bands, G4BUO, 6Y5HN, VE3EJ and VE3VHB, the VEs on back scatter. I only made 6 Qs on 10m, despite 6 visits covering over 1 hr. 15 was not much better, 26 Qs. If there were openings then I missed them! 80m was noisy but spotting the openings was again very difficult.

I tried 3 80m skeds with ZL1AIZ and made it at the last opportunity, the very end of his sunset. It was very noticeable that the LF experts, like VK6HD, turned up just when you would expect and were easy to work. I mentioned earlier that 40 opened earlier than I expected and on the Saturday I could hear Ian, G3TMA from 1530! Unfortunately he couldn't hear me, arrgh! The other interesting effect was on sunday morning. As dawn came up over Europe, even though it was dark in VP9, it was possible to hear some well sited stations on 20m. 20m opened up well before dawn and I was then able to run some of the sunday morning operators looking for VK on the long path I suppose. Several VKs were audible in VP9 on what is the short path, but I couldn't raise them, especially VK3WIA! As I had realised that I should work as many UK stations as possible I tried to be active with the beams on the UK to match the times when the UK stations should be on, during Saturday and sunday afternoon, during the middle of the UK evening and sunday morning, even though propagation might not be the best. I wanted to grab as many casual Qs as possible. I think that this paid off.

I find staying awake for..24 hours very difficult, I nodded off from 5-5.30 am local time.

I had non-contest stations calling all the time despite saying VE/VK/G stations only. People were only trying to help! Either that or they wanted to join the Commonwealth. In the end I worked 100+ non-contest stations during the contest. To be fair during the night I worked Ws on 80m just to stay awake! I spent a lot of time on 80 and 40 searching for casual VE/VK Qs but found very few bonuses. I thought that operating standards were excellent. Several times the frequency went completely quiet when I asked for a repeat from a weak station. I had the continuous callers, they come from all denominations (!), and were particularly bad on sunday morning. It's the sunday driver syndrome. A lot of G's gave me serials in the 001/005 order I hope they got a new band/country . You can't crack every pile up with a VP9 call! If Keith, G3OHN, had not asked 9V1YC to stand by I don't think I could have cracked the G pileup for a good bonus QSO. Thanks, Keith. Andy, 5W1VJ, was a good signal on 20 and 15, I should have tried harder to get him on 40m.

Well done Alan, I had nearly given up on you when you called in at the end of

propagation on 40m. (*Ed: That was Picketts Lock weekend, and I was only operating for 5 minutes specifically to give Bob 40m points!*) I had no opportunity to use the WARC bands as the contest took priority, still I did those for you last year.

Finally many thanks to Judy and Allan, VP9AD, for their great hospitality. Nothing was too much trouble for Allan, including putting up the 40m Yagi and its tower just for the weekend (!), retuning his 80m dipole for CW, allowing me to set up his station how I wanted and acting as cook and bottle washer for the weekend. If I worked you in the contest you will get a card from me via the bureau, you don't need to QSL me. All other non-contest contacts will be QSL'd on request, direct or via bureau as you prefer. What about next year, did I hear you ask, well I need a good 80m antenna as well as 40 and 20 but where ? You will just have .o wait and see!

Final score subject to checking:

Band	80	40	20	15	10	Total
QSO	70	163	326	38	6	603
Bonus	19	34	50	22	6	131
Pnts.	730	1495	2630	630	150	5635

Total stations worked in the three sessions was about 1000.

VK9NJ IN CQ WW CW DX CONTEST 1993

JOHN WALKER, G0JQN

It was when I was planning the itinerary for a visit to my son in Sydney, Australia and to other relations in New Zealand and Oceania between November 1993 and February 1994 that I realised that I would be on Norfolk Island during the CQ WW CW DX Contest.

I have long been a keen CW contester, but having a very modest set up at home, am usually one of those who gives out points rather than wins awards, but the opportunity to get on the air from such a DX-otic location, and in the calendar's major event was too good to be missed, so I wrote to both Jim Smith VK9NS, who is an ex member of my local radio club in Weston Super Mare and to Bob Davison VK9ND to enquire if they might be willing to make a rig available to me for a few hours, or allow me to take part in a multi operator event. When I got no reply from either Bob or Jim, I phoned my friend Phil G3SWH for help and advice and he obtained and gave me Jim Smith's fax number. Phil also gave me some very helpful advice about dealing with the (hoped for) pile ups, and also offered to take care of the QSL-ing chores for me.

In Sydney, the day of departure for Norfolk Island neared, and still no responses. Do I bother to get a licence? Do I bother at all? Taking the bull by the horns, I faxed VK9NS and the next day received a firm 'no, it's not convenient. I then phoned VK9ND who initially said 'no', but on learning of the response from VK9NS mellowed, perhaps out of sympathy, and allowed me limited access, limited on two counts:-

- his set up is in his home and he had only recently come out of hospital, and
- his neighbour runs a museum of old engines, some with magneto ignition causing QRN5 when he runs them. There is no RIS there!

So, off to the Spectrum Management Agency in North Sydney, where I had for a whole hour the undivided attention of two officials who worked out which characters (apart from themselves that is) to feed into the computer for the successful production of a licence. One snag was that everyone on

the island just uses a P O Box number as an address. This was not acceptable as I was required to provide an exact location. Fortunately, I had with me a large scale map of the island, naming roads etc., so was able to pin point VK9ND's address. The other snag was selecting a callsign. Eventually a dictat was produced limiting me to VK9N and one other letter, i.e. 26 possible choices, less those already allocated, and I could have only three guesses amongst the unallocated. My first choice of VK9N + J (for John) worked, and the least painful part of the process was the payment of A$35. I later discovered that VK9NJ was issued some 7 years ago to VK2ANO, who was surprised to be suddenly receiving QSL cards again.

And so to VK9ND's shack. Wow! Radios, linears etc. all over the place. He eventually agreed to me using one of his transceivers (a TS-680S), but in the event only for a total of just over 7 hours. At least he had some good aerial arrays - a three element beam at over sixty feet. There is so much more room for them on the island, and no planning permissions required.

I started the operating in the contest at 0245 UTC, and the first QSO was with UN7JJ on 21 MHz, and it was not easy, as there was hardly any room for my keyer, let alone the log book, which was relegated to my lap (lap, not lap top computer!). I was using a paper log and any hope of keeping a real time dupe sheet was out of the question - you might argue that one was not necessary, but it would have been helpful on 14 MHz. The trouble was that Bob hadn't used CW since he took his licence, so had no CW filters at all, which made getting a workable slot on 14 MHz very difficult indeed when Europe was in full flow. I found it virtually impossible to call CQ and then sort out a call, so spent most of my time searching an pouncing. I only found 3 G's - G4CNY, G3PJT and G3MXJ. The latter must have been very surprised to get a 'GM DENNIS ES GL' from VK9NJ!. The other snag was that Bob would frequently natter to me in the middle of the pile ups.

In spite of everything, I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and think that I acquitted myself quite well in the circumstances, making 472 QSO's on 14, 21 and 28 MHz only, but what I wouldn't have given to have had my own rig, or at least one with a CW filter in it. I think that I provided a large part of Japan with a multiplier, and am pretty certain that I was the only active station on the island.

Bob did agree to my going back after the contest to give the non contest types the opportunity to work VK9NJ on CW, but no times were convenient to him and my own hosts, the latter having organised every waking moment apart from the contest.

G3SWH has all the log details on his computer and has arranged for QSL cards to be printed, and has answered all direct requests received so far. If anyone needs a card, please let Phil (QTHR in any callbook) have the details. A copy of my paper log has been sent to CQ magazine as a check log and a copy of my Australian licence sent to the DXCC Desk at ARRL HQ.

Finally, my sincere thanks to Bob Davison, VK9ND for making this operation possible, and to Phil Whitchurch, G3SWH for his help and encouragement.

A MID PACIFIC ODYSSEY

Mike Parker, G4IUF

This year's trip was somewhat different from last year's, in that apart from Guam, the remainder of the islands visited were not part of the normal tourist route, and consequently, information about them was hard to come by. Fortunately we found at our local library, a copy of the Lonely Planet "Survival Guide to Micronesia" - this is a

mine of up to date information and I can thoroughly recommend its "warts and all" approach".

Having been part of Continental's Onepass frequent flyer programme for 5 years we had acquired enough miles that all but the island hopper flights were free, so booking and travel should not have been a problem. Unfortunately there was some upheaval in the Pacific airlines, which resulted in Continental abandoning their flights to New Zealand & Australia (which didn't affect us), plus the feeders for these from Denver to Honolulu (which certainly did). However, thanks to some very helpful booking staff the way was smoothed and we departed on schedule on November 1st.

At this point I had better explain what happened to the original itinerary, which had been Hawaii - Palau - Guam - Kosrae - Majuro - Hawaii. As you'll appreciate, there is no point in going to these places without a licence to operate, and, despite considerable efforts by various people, the Palau licence never materialised, also, with the forthcoming vote on the charter of association with the US, politically this was not the best time to visit. Palau was therefore dropped from the schedule, allowing an extra 2 days each on Kosrae and Majuro, the remainder having been eaten up by re-scheduling due to the airline problems.

We left Gatwick at 1300 on November 1st, arriving at LA via Houston at 1910 local, overnighted at a hotel near the airport and took off for Hawaii on the 2nd at 1230, arriving at 1610. Hawaii is a super place to spend a couple of days. We revisited some of our favourite haunts on Oahu and did some prospecting for goodies to pick up on the return.

On 4th November we left Hawaii at 1725, crossed the date line, and arrived on Guam at 2115 on the 5th. Here, we hit some problems. Having no hotel van to meet us, we took a taxi, as everywhere, we went on a curious route to the hotel. On arrival we discovered that there had been a change of management and no record of our booking existed! Fortunately there were rooms vacant. Due to the manner of the "departure" of the previous management, it was not considered advisable to walk round the rear of the hotel, this coupled with the imminent arrival of a tropical storm kind of precluded any ham radio operation, not a good start.

We spent 5 days on Guam sightseeing and getting a tan, the sea is incredibly clear, and Tumon Bay a great place to snorkel and meet the fish. Most of the hotels cater exclusively to the thousands of Japanese tourists who treat Guam somewhat in the same way as we treat the Costas in Spain.

We left Guam on November 10th at 015, and arrived on Kosrae at 1430, via Chuuk and Pohnpei. The islands and surrounding reefs look great from the air, the water is all colours, from a deep blue to turquoise. On arrival at Kosrae I was eager to make up for lost time and had the 10m long wire out within half an hour of checking in.

The first QSO, on 10MHz was with an SP, and many Europeans were worked in the next hour before the band died out in that direction. The following morning the W3DZZ went up over an inlet, so that it was over water at high tide. Band conditions were fair, and many Europe and east coast US QSO's were made, plus hordes of JAs. Unfortunately top band was unusable due to 30 over 9 QRM from a local quarry, this also affected 80, where it was 15-20 over. Only a few QSOs were made on 80, other islands, a few JAs and west coast US.

One thing that baffled me was the way I could call CQ Europe with no takers, get fed up, look around the band, find a European, call him, work him (usually first call), QSY, call CQ Europe again, and still get no takers! I found the only way to get a

run of Europeans was to work the JA pile up, listen carefully for Europe and work on an opportunity basis - really weird - was everyone watching packet and not tuning the band?

One problem encountered on 7 MHz was the tremendous number of illegal signals, originating, it's thought, from Indonesia, these are all over 10MHz and the CW portion of 7 MHz, and are so strong that working through them is impossible - you have to find the spaces, the VKs say they are CBers, working between the islands and also pirates in the nautical sense, who prey on small inter-island craft in that part of the world.

Altogether, Kosrae was a great success, and over 2,500 QSOs were made on all bands 7-28 MHz. The island was pleasant, unhurried, and the people very friendly, the hire car wasn't. After various alarms it died on a Sunday morning - at least this allowed me a whole day on the air, problem - not much around in day time in the wilds of the Pacific! During our travels I ran into John V63WA, who is a marine biologist at the Aqua culture centre. He was giving us the tour, and asked what had brought us to Kosrae, my wife immediately said amateur radio. John has only barefoot capability and a G5RV, but has hopes of improving his station.

After a pleasant week, it was time to set off for Majuro. On route the only stop was Kwajalein, where I was able to talk to Ken, V73C, only from the aircraft though, no landing being permitted for non-military personnel. On Majuro I got the antennas up fairly speedily, but, as on the last few days on Kosrae the bands had turned very sour, making it difficult to get outside the Pacific rim. Calling the few Europeans I could hear still worked though! Visited George, V73EX, and with his 4 element managed to work a couple of HAs and an S5, that was the weirdest QSO of all, we were on SSB for a change, 59+ both ways, but neither of us could attract a single other station to call either of us - propagation and amateurs are both very strange.

Despite the poor conditions, still managed around 2000 QSO's the JAs appear insatiable for DX, as does the US.

Majuro is a strange place, it's the seat of Government of the Marshall Islands, and a brand new Capitol Building announces the fact. 75% of the population is under 25, 33% under 16, the average family is 7.1 children, all this on an atoll 35 miles long and a couple of hundred yards wide at best. It epitomises all the problems of the third world in a nutshell. Our hotel manager was a very alert 15 year old. Apart from its problems it's a beautiful place, the lagoon and the reef are quite incredible to explore, and the brightly coloured fish a wonder to behold.

Well, after another happy week, it was time to return, back on the island hopper from the last time and back to Honolulu, arriving at 2am on the same day as we departed at 1920, thanks to re-crossing the date line. There was a cold snap, and the 61 degrees sure felt cold after the 80s and 90s of Micronesia. The following day was Thanksgiving, and the hotel had a free dinner laid on for its guests, served by the management - turkey and cranberry sauce has never tasted so good! We picked up our souvenirs, then back home by the same route we had arrived.

All in all, the trip was somewhat of an eye opener, and we have a whole basket of memories, some great ones of beautiful islands basking in blue seas, but tinged also with the hardship some of the people suffer. Wouldn't have missed it for the world.

Thanks to Continental for the flights, V73C for licensing, G0LZT for ATU and meter, Royal Grove HI for the Thanksgiving dinner, and everyone who worked me. QSLs sent direct have all been answered.

J6 - St. LUCIA - A MICRO DXPEDITION
Herbert Asmussen, G/OZ7SM

It was in mid-December last year, the WX was rotten, and we walked by our travel agent in Henley-in-Arden. "Where is there a nice place with guaranteed sunshine and not in Florida ('cos we had lived there)? How about St. Lucia?" Well, J6 doesn't sound too bad. "You are not taking your radio!" - "To J6, sure I am!" - so a trip for 14 days was booked for March 21st till April 3rd, Easter Sunday.

Enquiry with RSGB Member Services told you to call on the Police HQ, Castries, St. Lucia in person! Luckily, Mike, G4PFF heard that I was going there and he gave me the correct info: Go to the Ministry of Works and Communications opposite the docks near the market in Castries. See the Chief of Telecommunications, Mr. Perry Mason (yes, Sir!). Call him on 452-4444 to make sure he will be in the office. I did that, and got a very cordial welcome, being the first OZ to apply for a licence, he punched the details in on his PC and said: "OK, you go ahead, and have a great holiday, enjoy, and this one is on the house"! That made me quite happy, as the licence fee is EC$25.00 (equal to US$10.00) and should be paid in local currency, but I did not have any EC$ at that moment, so that was a nice surprise at the start of a holiday. RSGB please note!

Back at the ranch - we were staying in a rented villa at the northern most point of St. Lucia, just opposite Pigeon Island, which is now no longer an island, but connected with a man-made causeway. But beautiful view towards the West and North. I had hoped for some tall and slim palm trees to shoot the dipoles into, but to my chagrin, there were no tall trees. After a not so successful try with the dipoles in a bush, the residential gardener/caretaker disappeared with his machete and came back after 30 minutes with a slim, but crooked, trunk about 15ft long. This was then to support the dipoles in the centre, and the ends were fixed with fishing line to various plants, bushes etc.

The rig was a TS50S, which runs about 100 watts. It is amazing what this little box of tricks can do. I can only highly recommend it for the 'travelling' ham. The power supply was an old Yaesu 'pancake' switching power supply. When this is too close to the rig, it radiates a lot of spurious, like a BC TX. So I quickly got it located as far away from the transceiver as possible.

21st of March @ 18:30z - the first CQ on 20m resulted in a 59+ from YV5ENI in Caracas. So far so good. So lets try to give these island hunters a go! 14260 seemed to be free, but soon I was told to clear the frequency! A number of South Europeans, whose calls shall remain unmentioned, were calling VK4CRR 'blind' on a 'new island'. Are you there Bill??...This went on for hours, and any attempt to make use of 14260 failed. By the way, 10 days later, on 1st April, I QSO'd Bill, VK4CRR, on Solitary Island. He came back: "That must be G/OZ7SM." "No, Bill, this is J6/OZ7SM" "What the devil are you doing there?" "Getting something which is in short supply in the UK these days - sunshine!" "OK, mate, good for you, see ya". That made me feel better.

On the 22nd, condx were reasonable into EU around 20z and resulted in approx. 50 QSOs in just over one hour, almost all Europe. The first G in the log was G3VJP.

13 zulu daily was sked time with my old buddies in the States, and Bert, PJ8AD as well as my mates for more than 45 years, Bob SM0EBP, and Wolf, DL1SD. This worked without fail every day into the US, but the condx into EU got worse and worse.

On the 24th, Laurie, G3UML, came in 5 and 9 to say hello and on 25th in the morning

around 0600z, Oceania came rolling in, including a nice chat with Jim, VK9NS from OC005 and, finally, FK8CP in New Cal.

Later in the afternoon. I listened to Steve, K4JPD in Atlanta, whom I had visited 6 or 7 years ago. Here, you sit on St. Lucia with a crooked 15 foot poke, and Steve rolls in via his 4 over 4 over 4 at 150/100/50 ft. So the difference between the small pistols and the big guns! Same p.m., Bob G3PJT and Mike G4PFF came to say 'hello', and I was grateful to Mike for his info. Also, Neville, G3NUG stopped by.

I only had a small go at the CQ WPX on the weekend 26/27. After all, it was a holiday, not a contest trip!

Unfortunately, the local stomach bug got the better of me, and I had to keep a low profile for 3 days. And no late night DXing, by order of the high command!

One day we took a trip on the 'Unicorn', which is a 140ft long replica of a 19th century Brig with 600 sq. ft of sail, from Castries to the southern town of Soufriere, which is just north of St. Lucia's landmarks, the Two Pitons. From the boat, we went on a small excursion to 'the world's only drive-in volcano'.

The sight is quite awesome, with bubbles all over on the surface, and the smell of rotten eggs (SO2, not a new country!). Via a beautiful botanical garden, belonging to an old plantation, back to the ship, via the famous Marigot Bay, and return to Castries. A very memorable excursion on the old brig and her very nimble sailors. The way they literally ran up the rigging in their bare feet was amazing. How much would it cost to loan one of them for my forthcoming cubical quad project?!

After 14 days in quasi Paradise, the time came to pack up and dismantle the station. In absolute leisure, it had resulted in 500Qs and 65Cs.

We had a wonderful time, and it was fun!

PS: I will QSL via the bureau.

PPS: We left St. Lucia with a temp of 32C and arrived in London where it was almost freezing and we drove home in a blustery snow storm on Easter Monday

MEMBERSHIP LIST

Thanks to those members who have advised Mike, G4PFF, of errors in their membership records. I plan to publish an amended membership list with the June Bulletin, so please advise Mike right away if your address needs correcting, and you have not told Mike already.

Colin, G3DPX/N6UH, has written to say that the membership list put him in touch again with Tony, G3SNN, with whom he worked 30 years ago at GCHQ! Great Stuff!

BANABA WARC BANDS ANTENNA APPEAL

This appeal is now closed. Mike, G4PFF, reports that a total of £442.52 was raised. The cost of the antenna, including shipping, was £386.85. The balance of £55.67 will be used to contribute towards the import duty which had to be paid to get the antenna out of bond on arrival. Thanks to the following contributors:

G3KMA, G4DYO, G3NOF, G4AFJ, G4BWP, G3RTE, G3PMR, G4PFF, GM3BQA, G/OZ7SM, G4BUO, G3NUG, G0SNV, CDXC DINNER RAFFLE.

It was good to hear signals from the DXpedition on 12/17m, although it was disappointing that conditions were so poor.

PROGRESS on LF ANTENNAS - *Bob Whelan, G3PJT*

When I spoke on 40M phased arrays at the HF Convention 1993, I described various approaches to the design, construction and setting up such antennas. Over the past 4 months its become very clear that if you wish to operate under low solar flux propagation you need to be able to operate all HF and LF bands and in particular have a signal a bit better than the average on 160, 80 and 40 (& 30?). I thought members might be interested in an update on my own LF antenna thoughts.

I have been using the 4 element 1/4 wave spaced square on 40M this winter and am well pleased with the results. Actually I am delighted.! I have resisted the temptation to fiddle with it. Instead I have tried to gauge its competitive positioning against other 40M stations. Alan (G3PMR) and I operated CQWW CW with it and it was quite clear that we were putting out a competitive signal. EA8?! stopped to chat (!) to ask about the antenna and indirect reports from a US contester indicate that we stood out a bit from the Euro-babble. Of course it doesn't compete with a 3/4 element Yagi on a 100' tower but then its only 4, 32' verticals set on the ground. Still propagation is the great leveller, Steve, P29DX reported on 40M LP that Don, G3OZF and I had about the same signal. Mind you the morning I worked Steve, only about 3-4 Gs got through and Steve was inaudible further north. I seem to be able to raise W6/7 and KH6 LP in the late afternoon and hear them through the Euro QRM. As far as I can tell the front to back (F/B) ranges between 15-20 dB and occasionally up to 25dB. This seems to be very dependent on fading characteristics. The F/B is affected by the proximity of other antennas. My 80M sloper being the chief culprit. Reliability has been good. The mechanical problems appear to be resolved except that I still need to improve the sleeving between the sections. I threaded the feed-lines through garden hose (like Chris, G4BUE) and laid them about 2Ó in the surface. This looks as if it will survive the lawnmower.

So what about other bands and especially 80M ? I am using the array on 30M where it has a bit of directionality and the SWR isn't too bad. Good enough to work 3Y0PI anyway. Because of the interaction affects referred to earlier I am planning to use the same array on 80M with dual band elements. Replacing one 40M vertical with a Butternut does not seem to upset the 40M performance and does allow limited 80M operation, provided that the array is switched so that the main feed-line goes straight to that element (as well as feeding all the others via the network or phase delay line). This is possible at one direction setting, beaming away from the corner where the multiband element is situated.However the main issue is that a Butternut is not very efficient at 80M (its radiation resistance is too low, its also a bit expensive). I have therefore been modelling a taller dual band element, a sort of Super Butternut about 40' tall, as this seems to be the height that the 80M radiation resistance begins to look useful. Always bearing in mind that arrays can have very low impedances due to mutual coupling. With some sort of LC circuit to cancel the 40M inductive and the 80M capacitive reactances a workable arrangement could emerge, at least that's what ELNEC seems to show. I will keep you posted.What I have in mind is a 2 element array for 80M spaced at opposite sides of the 40M square, i.e. a spacing of 0.177 wave at 80M and some fairly simple changes to the 40M switch box to get the right element current phasing at 80M.I have also made real progress on the measurement front. You may recall that I dismissed most of the RF bridges available commercially and yet said that a bridge was essential for the design and tune up of the close spaced arrays for 80M. I

have now built a RF bridge which looks as if it is easily accurate enough to meet my requirements. This may become available commercially in the UK later this year. I should have more details by HF Convention time. Such a bridge will be needed to design and test the 80M phasing network.

A TWO-BAND VERTICAL FOR 3.5 & 7 MHz

Don Beattie, G3OZF

INTRODUCTION

This article is written in response to requests and suggestions from several people to describe the construction of my very simple, and yet highly effective, two band vertical antenna for the LF bands. There is nothing radical or revolutionary about the design. It is simple, well tried and solid. It has withstood the ravages of a number of year's storms at my QTH and has given consistent, competitive and in some cases astonishing performance on both 3.5 and 7MHz.

THE ORIGINAL DESIGN

The basic design is based on the W3DZZ trapped dipole. This well known antenna is at its best on 80m and 40m, where it approximates to a half-wave dipole on each of these bands. LF band dipoles however, at least at the heights that are normally attainable in amateur installations, provide relatively high-angle radiation and the dipole is not at its best when trying to receive real DX signals on 80 and 40 metres. Often European signal levels swamp the relatively weak DX signals. Some greater discrimination in favour of the very low angle signals is needed.

I have a great interest in contest working on the LF/HF bands, and whatever solution to antennas for 80 and 40 needed to satisfy the following criteria:

- Mechanically robust, to withstand the high winds frequently experienced at my QTH
- Not too unsightly
- Capable of full power operation on SSB
- Competitive performance
- Easy to construct and adjust

All in all, a vertical antenna seemed to be a possibility, and I decided to try a vertical version of the W3DZZ, using one half of the dipole element.

Construction of the prototype was very simple. 32 ft of relatively lightweight aluminium tubing was assembled, a high power 7MHz trap affixed to the top, and some 22ft of wire connected to the top side of the trap, and a halyard run from this to the top of the main antenna tower at the other end of the garden.

As with all quarter-wave verticals, the earth mat is all-important. In my case, three copper ground rods at the base of the antenna, together with some 20 buried radials (length from 20ft to 70ft) make up a modest earth mat. Even more attention to the earth arrangements would further improve performance.

The antenna was fed with 52 ohm coaxial cable. On first testing the antenna, the VSWR was 1:1 at 7050 kHz and, with adjustment of the length of the top section, could also be made close to this figure at any point in the 80 metre band. A few year's experience with this antenna showed some consistent characteristics:

- It would often beat other stations using beams in the "pile-up" on 40 metres.

- The DX performance was some 2 s-points superior to my monoband dipoles which at that time were some 60 ft high

- The European performance was, as predicted, worse than the dipoles - again by some 2 s-points.

THE FINAL DESIGN

Encouraged by the performance of this "bent" vertical, plans were put in place to convert it to a true "vertical".

The bottom 32ft comprises 20ft and 12ft lengths of thick-wall 2" diameter aluminium scaffold pole, joined by a scaffold tube jointing clamp - the sort that fits inside the tube, and is tightened by a screw action. It is important not to trust this steel clamp as a conductor, and after clamping the two sections together, aluminium strip was attached across the clamp using self-tapping screws.

At the top of the 32ft length of 2" aluminium tubing, a fibreglass tube section provides the insulation between lower and upper sections of the antenna. Into this section is inserted a length of aluminium tubing which tapers to the diameter necessary to accept the main top section of the antenna. This top section is made from the element of one of the cheaply available 5/8 wave CB antennas. These antennas are both moderately sturdy, and a very cheap source of a 22ft antenna section.

Between the lower and upper sections the trap assembly is connected, using "D" section aluminium strip. All connections are tightly made with self-tapping screws and taped using PVC and self-amalgamating tape.

The antenna, when assembled, looks large when on the ground (it is some 55ft long). A ground post was securely driven into the ground at the required base point for the antenna, and a hinge made using two heavy-duty antenna clamps, a carriage bolt and a length of thick-wall PVC tubing. A second pair of clamps with carriage bolt and tubing forms the second fixing point on the ground post. Remember that the base of the antenna must be totally insulated from any other metal parts of the support assembly.

Three guy points are arranged at 120 degree intervals around the antenna at a distance of some 20ft from the base, and guy points secured at the 20ft and 31ft points on the lower section of the antenna. Using a double extending ladder as a gin-pole, the antenna can easily be raised by four people in a matter of a couple of minutes.

After raising the antenna the VSWR should be checked. On 7MHz, it should be very flat, and 1:1 around the lower end of the band. On 3.5 MHz the length of the top section should be adjusted to bring the 1:1 VSWR (or minimum VSWR point) to 3650 kHz. This should provide a VSWR of less than 2:1 across the whole of the 3.5 to 3.8 MHz band.

The performance has been very encouraging. Notable DX worked on 80 metres included FO0, HK0, ST0, VS6, ZL7, 3Y5, 7P8, 9V1, VK9M, XE, XX9. 40 metres brought C2, KH5, S2, S7, V85, VK9M, VQ9, XF4, XU, XV, XW, 1S0, 3Y0, and 3Y5 to list but a few.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

I am now assembling a second identical antenna, with the intention of feeding the two antennas in and out of phase on 7MHz, to give some steering of the polar diagram. It is not clear how the 1/4 wave phase shift and spacing on 80 metres will perform, but theory suggests that the antenna will be switchable between broadside and cardioid. Time will tell.

SUMMARY

I make no apologies for the simplicity of this antenna. It is a sturdily constructed and gives an outstanding account of itself. If you haven't tried a vertical on the LF bands, and have a spot where it will not be immediately surrounded by buildings, why not give it a try ?

PHILIP J. WEAVER MBE

Mr. Weaver, after spending 15 years at sea and associated other jobs, took up employment with the Hong Kong Government's Marine Department in January 1973, where he was employed as Marine Officer in various jobs in the Department until January 1985, when he was appointed as Marine Officer Communications, and undertook specialist training with the United States Coast Guard as a Search and Rescue Mission Co-ordinator. From then on, he was responsible for the formation and implementation of the Department's new Search and Rescue centre with its state of the art communications equipment to comply with the International Maritime Organisation's Global Maritime Distress and Safety System, which was to be implemented in February 1992. The new centre was opened in October 1989 in the premises previously occupied by the Port Communications Centre (PCC), of which he was a staff member, which were transferred to the other premises as the Vessel Traffic Center, leaving the offices of the PCC to be used as the new Maritime Rescue Co-ordination centre.

Throughout this period, in his spare time, Mr. Weaver was also involved in many other activities. From 1973, he served with the Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force (RHKAAF), until November 1978, ending up as a Pilot Officer flying helicopters before retiring on medical grounds. He was also a keen yachtsman, joining the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club upon arrival in Hong Kong.

After leaving the RHKAAF, he took up amateur radio and obtained his licence and call sign of VS6CT, and became, from then on, a complete radio addict. In the early '80s, Philip assisted in communications with the South China Sea Race, looking after the interests of yachtsman and their radios, as well as amateurs, ever since. He has also been involved in several emergencies with yachts in difficulties, over the years providing guidance and communications when needed.

Throughout the period from 1980 to the present day he has also been actively involved in the running of the Hong Kong Amateur Radio Transmitting Society and the establishment of the English Language Amateur Radio Communications Society, of which he is President today.

Currently, Mr. Weaver is Senior Marine Officer, Search and Rescue, and during any SAR operation, he is Search Co-ordinator responsible to the Search Director for the proper and efficient prosecution of any SAR incident.

The award of the MBE is in recognition of his work in the Marine Department and his unique experience and dedication to the improvement of Search and Rescue in Hong Kong's area of responsibility, the South China Sea.

AMATEUR RADIO

Honour Roll

1st in the world to work 8 band worked all Japan area (WAJA). (SSB 2, 10, 12, 15, 17, 20, 40, and 80 metres. 48 Prefectures).

DXpeditions:

Macau	CR9 & XX9
Madeira	CT3
Virgin Islands	KP2
Malta	9H2

Ed: I was planning to publish a photo of VS6CT at Buckingham Palace. However, due to G4BUE's holidays, the Newsletter was printed elsewhere this time, and it was not practical to include a photograph.

RSGB Commonwealth Century Club Awards

Fred Handscombe, G4BWP

The RSGB Commonwealth Century Club awards are a series of awards for contacts with the various countries of the Commonwealth. Some of the larger countries have been sub-divided into call areas. Many active Dxers may have worked many of the Commonwealth countries but may not have confirmed contacts with the additional call areas required for the awards.

During 1993 the RSGB HF Awards programme was reviewed by the HF Committee, and certain changes and additions to the rules were made. The revised award programme was given a low key launch at the 1993 HF Convention. The following article details changes made to the Commonwealth Century Club awards and will hopefully get a few of you sorting through those QSL cards! As with all awards, it is strongly recommended that a copy of the current rules and application form are obtained prior to applying. The RSGB HF Awards package detailing all RSGB HF Awards (except IOTA) is available for £1.50 from G4BWP QTHR. IOTA details may be obtained from G3KMA QTHR. Note the details published in the 1994 RSGB call book are NOT correct.

A summary of the changes made to the Commonwealth Awards is as follows:

- Addition of WARC and 160 metre band endorsements
- Credit for "Deleted" countries for the Multi-band awards
- New start date for the Commonwealth Century Club award
- Clarification of the requirements for credit of Antarctic and South Atlantic Treaty Areas
- Addition and deletions to the Commonwealth list

The Basic Award

The Commonwealth Century Club (CCC) award may be claimed for confirmed contacts with 100 of the Commonwealth Call areas which are current on the list at the time of application. The start date is now 15 November 1945. No "deleted" areas will be counted for the CCC award. Contacts with South Georgia and South Sandwich are valid only with VP8 call signs. For Antarctic, South Orkney and South Shetland Islands contacts must be with a station with a call sign issued by a Commonwealth government (e.g. VP8, ZL5, VK0 VU etc.).

The "Supreme" CCC is available for working ALL the areas on the list at the time of application. At present this stands at 121. Only TWO of these have been issued so far. A plaque is available for this award.

The Multi-band Awards

The 5-band CCC award is for contacts on the usual five bands (80-40-20-15-10), and is available in 5 classes. Class 4 requires 200 call areas across the bands, building up to the ultimate 5BCCC Supreme Award for 500 areas. The Class 1 and Supreme awards have plaques available.

Once the Class 4 five band award has been obtained, it may be endorsed for both the WARC bands and Top band

The WARC band endorsements are also available in 5 classes. WARC Class 4 requires 150 call areas across the WARC bands, building up to the ultimate 5BCCC (WARC) Supreme Award for 300 areas.

The Top band endorsements are for 30 to 70 call areas in steps of 10.

The requirements are essentially the same as the CCC award, but for these awards "deleted" call areas may be credited in place of "missing" contacts, but only up the maximum possible for that band. The "deleted" call areas are detailed in full in the awards list. Full credit must be given to Roger, G3KMA, who carried out the detailed research into the various dates of countries joining and leaving the Commonwealth. Those who have obtained their licenses more recently should not be put off by this as most of the changes happened before July 1976.

So dust off the shoe boxes and sort out those cards ! It is planned to have a desk at the HF Convention in October to check applications for RSGB HF awards so there is plenty of time to confirm your outstanding contacts and join the Commonwealth Century Club. 73 de Fred G4BWP.

Sandholm, Bridge End Road, Red Lodge, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, IP28 8LQ

(Please do not telephone with awards queries but do write with an SAE, Tnx)

G/OZ7SM BARBECUE

Please note that this barbecue will be held on *Sunday* July 24th, and not *Saturday* 24th as stated in some copies of the April Bulletin.

Full details of the event, including directions, will be included in the July Newsletter.

Would anyone wishing to attend what promises to be a first class event, please contact me (G3PMR), and let me know numbers and names.

The following are the early takers for the barbecue:

G0HXN & Jenny
G3NUG & Trish
G3PMR & Beryl
G3SNN & Jill
G3UOF/ZD8M & Sheila
G3XMZ & Marion
G4PFF & Ann
ZD8LOU (Louise)

CDXC ANNUAL DINNER

The annual CDXC dinner was held at the Peacock Hotel, Henton, on Saturday February 26th 1994. The following members and their XYL's (where appropriate!) attended: G3PMR, G4PFF, G3PJT, G3WGV, G3SWH, G3RTE, G3NUG, G3KMA, G4DQW, G3SJX, G4WVX, G0LMX (a total of 19 in all).

A raffle was organised by G4PFF/G3PMR to raise funds for the T33 WARC bands antenna. Beryl and Ann, XYLs of G3PMR & G4PFF, did a great job selling raffle tickets, so much so, that Beryl was nobbled by Neville, G3NUG, to sell raffle tickets at the HF Convention! The prize, a bottle of Champagne, was won by Mike, G4PFF (It wasn't fixed, honest!!). The raffle raised a net amount of £37.52 towards the T33 antenna fund.

As in the previous year, the Peacock served up an excellent meal, which everyone seemed to enjoy. The evening was rounded off with a fascinating talk, which was illustrated by an excellent set of 35mm slides, by John, G3WGV, on the VK9MM Mellish Reef DXpedition. Even the XYLs enjoyed it!

All in all, it was a very successful and enjoyable evening. However, we shall probably look for a larger venue for next year's event, as the total numbers wanting to come when the event was first announced approached a 100% over capacity, and many had to be refused tickets - a great shame, because on the night, there were a number of spare places caused by last minute cancellations (for good reasons) and a very few who just didn't turn up. Would anyone who can suggest a better venue please let David, G0HXN, know.

DX CALENDAR (*Tnx, DXNS*)

NOW	ZS8MI
NOW	VU7LI Laccadive
NOW	ZL1AMO Pacific
NOW?	D2 by G4AAL
Til May 8	CE/G0SMC
Til May 15?	3V8TM by IK8EVE
Til May 31	9X5DX
Til Jun	8Q7AA by JG2XYV
Til mid-94	JW5NM
May 1-10	J7 by IK2GNW
May 1-28	VE Is by KA2PHQ
May 3-6	AF-026 S79CK/C
May 4-8	T32WP
May 4-9	AH6IO/KH3
May 5-8	V6 by JA's
May 6-7	GB0CT/TM5TSM
May 7	EU-109 by G/W
May 7-8	ARI DX Contest
May 7-9	AS-067 JI6KVR
May 7-14	AF-033 S79CK/D
May 9-13	G IOTA ops
May 10-16	OC-195 by DL8NU
May 10-30	8P9GQ
May 12-20	K1EFI/VP9
May 13-15	SA-020 FY9IS
May 14	CDXC ARM
May 14	YORK DX CONVENTION
May 15-16	OJ0 by OHs
May 16-24	OC-173 by DL8NU
late May?	TZ6VV QRV
Jun 11-12	S American CW Cont
Jun 18-19	All Asia CW Contest
Jun 25-26	RSGB 160m CW Ctst
Jun 25-26	ARRL Field Day
Jul	CY9 St Paul Is
Jul 1??	Canada Day Contest
Jul 2-3	Venezuela SSB Ctst
Jul 9-10	IARU Contest
Jul 9-10	RSGB SWL Contest
Jul 16-17	SEANET CW Contest
Jul 16-17	HK DX Contest
Jul 23-24	Venezuela CW Contest
Jul 23-24	SEANET CW Contest
Jul 30-31	1994 IOTA CONTEST
Jul/Aug	TY1IJ QRV again
Aug 13-14?	WAE CW Contest
Aug 13-14?	Maryland QSO Party
Aug 20-21	SEANET SSB Contest
Sep 3-4	All Asian SSB Ctst
Sep 3-4?	LZ DX CW Contest
Sep 10-11	WAE SSB Contest
Sep 17-19	Scandinavian CW Ctst
Sep 24-25	Scandinavian SSB Ct
Sep 24-25	CQ WW RTTY Contest
Oct 1-2	VK/ZL/Oceania SSB Ct
Oct 7-9	HF/IOTA CONVENTION
Oct 8-9	VK/ZL/Oceania CW Cts
Oct 16	RSGB 10/15m CW Ctst
Oct 29-30	CQ WW SSB Contest
Nov 19-20	Austrian CW Contest
Nov 19-20	RSGB 160m CW Ctst
Nov 26-27	CQ WW CW Contest
Dec 3-4	ARRL 160m Contest
Dec 10-11	ARRL 10m Contest

PRATAS

The following are exact copies of Cluster messages and may be of interest to those wishing to know a little more about the behind the scenes Pratas story.

From: N4MM Date: 22-Mar 2216Z Subj: RE: Pratas Island

Just got messages off of MCI Mail, which includes Internet and according to Chod Harris, Bob Beatty, W4VQ called him on the phone to spread the word that the petition for separate DXCC Country status for Pratas has been removed from the DXAC agenda. The reason is lack of support and requests for info were not forthcoming. One could deduce from all this is that there is no supporting info that was requested. I get the same mail that the DXAC gets and this lack of support has frustrated the DXAC in acting on the petition. This has shown up in the committee mail several times. Maybe the Taiwanese Amateurs do not understand how the DXAC and the Awards Committee work. I am sure we will here more about this soon. 73, John, N4MM

From: KC1AG Date: 22-Mar 2328Z Subj: Pratas Dropped?

I would like to see the text of what Chod Harris says W4VQ has said, but things are not quite like what has been said thus far. The applicant has responded to one of the most important questions, that of ownership. I happen to be the "new country mother" for Pratas, and I sent in a transcript of Liu's answer to the DXAC. Still missing are two translations: one for his BV license, which is not even relevant to the Pratas petition, and a translation of a statement from a department in the BV government. It turns out

that both of these documents are not so straightforward to translate since they contain very technical language.

The other questions W4VQ sent BV4VB, the applicant, were DROPPED! One concerned who owned an UNDERWATER reef or bank (not exactly important) and another concerned who owned Scarborough Reef. Scarborough Reef, as we now know, is Chinese (PRC) but it is not claimed by the ROC. The other big question was about how to put together copies of sections of a large chart Liu sent. There was a SNAFU at HQ and they sent the DXAC a complete mess. This was NOT Liu's fault.

As I understand the DXAC's own rules, a petition for DXCC country status must be voted on regardless of its merits. The DXAC could vote on what is now in hand. As far as the translations are concerned, it should be possible to get translations from other sources IF someone had any serious doubts about Liu's translations.

I wonder if OH2BH's criticism of the DXAC's internal problems are the real cause behind the reported action? It is frustrating when an applicant does not respond, but Liu is a grad student and his top priority is his studies. As far as I know, the DXAC has never asked the CTARL for any help! 73 Bill KC1AG, NE Division DXAC Representative and mighty pissed with the DXAC's arcane tenure system and mindless leadership.

The following is reprinted from DXNS:

From Bill Shipp, KC1AG:

"Since I was quick to tell everyone when things were not functioning, I thought everyone interested would like a short update as to what has happened since it was announced that Pratas had been dropped from the DXAC agenda by Chairman W4VQ.

1. Translation of two appendices in Liu's petition, a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and validation of BV4VB's amateur licence have been sent to the DXAC.

2. A video tape of Pratas has been mailed to the DXAC from Taiwan.

3. Phil Weaver, VS6CT has provided the DXAC with a statement confirming that to the best of his knowledge there are no islets or rocks above water between Pratas and Taiwan.

4. Dr. Bolin Lee, BV5AF, president of the CTARL, has notified the DXAC that he will be pleased to help the Committee understand the geographical and political circumstances of Pratas. He just needs to know what the DXAC's questions are. Already he has sent HQ some documentation related to Taiwan's point 1 status.

Much of the above is still in the pipeline, so I cannot predict what questions will remain or whether or not Chairman Beatty (W4VQ) will restore Pratas to the agenda and schedule a vote. Most important is the fact that K5FUV at ARRL HQ has established a direct line of communication with Dr. Bolin Liu and the CTARL. Since any future questions may require documents from Taiwan, this should expedite things considerably."

COMMENTS ON SCARBOROUGH REEF

UK PacketCluster Network

Since Hans' petition for separate country status for Scarborough Reef was distributed to the DXAC, there have not been too many comments. A preliminary check on distances to greater China looks all right, but study of a detailed Defense Mapping Agency chart showed that there might not be enough land above water to set up and operate a station. According to the chart (based on a 1964 USN survey), only a cluster of rocks several meters high in the SW corner of the reef is above mean high tide. The descriptions of the reef in the So. China Sea Pilot (RN) and the DMA Sailing Directions differ in some important respects.

My guess is that this is going to be a tough one to get through the DXAC unless it can be demonstrated that the rocks are "big enough."

Looking at general WX patterns in the area, I would guess that were a suitable operation to be attempted, it would be anytime from now through the end of June. DK9KX has not announced any of attempt to show that one can indeed land on and operate from the rocks in so far as I know.

Hope you find this of interest in the post-3Y0PI period. 73 Bill (KC1AG)

UPDATE ON SCARBOROUGH REEF - *DXNS Office - G4DYO*

Today, 24th April, 1994, OH2BH and DL5VJ chartered a twin engine Britten-Norman airplane out of Manila, and flew to Scarborough Reef, a 2 hour flight, and surveyed the reef in great detail for 45 minutes. Some 100 pictures were taken, as well as 30 minutes of video. Included in the video is an interview with the pilot before and after the survey flight.

Survey Conditions

For today, the high tide was calculated for 09:05 am. The party arrived at SR at 09:55 am. The difference between high and low tide for this date is 55cm, less than 2 feet. Part of the survey was conducted as low as 100 ft above sea level.

All measurements will be shared between several participants. A detailed report will be provided for the ARRL, the DXAC, and the NCDXF and possibly others who might wish to share in the expenses involved: some US$ 1900 charter cost.

Brief Report of Findings

With the exception of several rocks or coral heads, the narrow belt of coral reef is totally under the surface of the sea. The diameter of the reef was estimated at 10 miles. There is an opening into the lagoon at the S end of the reef. Several rocks are found in the lagoon, but all are under the surface of the water.

Along the approx 30 miles of reef, only some 30 "rocks" - coral heads - were found protuding from the water. Only 2 of them were of significant size, and they were carefully observed. These rocks are estimated to be 5 by 6 ft with a height of approx 6 ft. above sea level. About half the rocks were with "nose dry" at the time of the survey.

Landing and Operating from Scarborough.

With calm weather, anchorage is possible within the lagoon. Staying and operating from solid soil of the reef is impossible at high tide. The only possible operating site would be one of the ship wrecks which were well above sea level at the time of the survey.

Conclusion

It is now up to adventurous expeditioners to get to the vicinity of the reef and find a dry piece of land at low tide on which to operate or operate from one of the wrecks. It is up to the DXAC to decide whether those thirty coral heads are enough to make this another DXCC country.

Postnote

There is often adventure present when DX is in the making, but this survey trip was supposed to be an exception. Having just left the reef, the control panel of the plane was seemingly on fire, with smoke and smell. All electricity went off, including that for the radios and navigation equipment. But the engines were still running, and we were able to find and reach the W. coast of the Philippines and land at Subic Bay, the ex US military base. From there we were transferred to Manila by another plane. God is often with DX, and we were delighted to report Her presence in Manila. We are glad to be back!

Regards from the South China Sea.

Martti Laine, VR2BH/DU1.

DXCC HONOR ROLL
(Reprinted from DXNS)

The listings in the March issue of QST showed only 7 UK stations in No. 1 position - G3KDB, G3LQP, G3SNN, G4BWP, G4EDG, G3GIR, GM3ITN. G3SNN was

the only one in No. 1 slot in the Phone HR; G4EDG, was the only one in that position for CW. The others were Mixed mode.

CHAIRMAN'S BIT
John Linford, G3WGV

As the CDXC year draws to a close, it's time for us all to reflect on the achievements and difficulties of the past year and look forward to another year of active involvement by us all in our wonderful hobby.

During the year, CDXC members have participated in numerous DXpeditions, and the club has sponsored several others. Despite steadily worsening conditions on the HF bands, activity seems to be maintained, the same people are still there in the pile-ups and DX indeed still is.

It's pleasing to see that membership of the club has remained buoyant, but one of the things that has been concerning me for some time is that the average age of the club seems to be keeping approximate pace with my chronological age. In other words, DXing is getting older.

Will DXing die of old age?

Following the initiatives of the RSGB over the past few years, there has been a considerable influx of younger people into the hobby. Surely some of these must be interested in DXing? In my local club, the Reading and District ARC, we have a dozen or so novices, together with a handful of young full class A's, so I decided to ask them what they thought. It was very revealing!

Why should this be? One of the first things to come across strongly is the extent to which DXing (HF or VHF) was seen as being a specialist part of the hobby. Ridiculous, I hear you say, and you are right, of course. But the simple fact is that facets of Amateur Radio like packet radio and VHF FM come far higher on the list for these youngsters.

I believe we, as DXers are part of the problem. We tend to surround ourselves with complex and expensive stations which are perceived as being necessary, but well outside the reach of younger people. But I think that there is something much more fundamental. Most DXers are not even members of their local clubs, so DXing simply isn't represented.

Join your local radio club!

Why aren't DXers interested in their local clubs? I've talked with many CDXC members over the years, and the recurring theme is that local clubs don't cater for the DXer, that all the talk is about 2m FM and packet, or even that the club never seems to do anything. So they don't join! Is it surprising then that youngsters don't see DXing as the mainstream of Amateur Radio?

As DXers, we owe it to future generations of Radio Amateurs to come in from the dark. Join your local club, and if it is not doing what you think it should be doing, then change it. Having been a member of RADARC for 20 years now, I am well aware that club committees are always looking for new ideas, new directions and new challenges. Young people, in particular are anxious to try out new things, and DXing can and will be one of the things they try; but only if they know it's there.

Just as every serious Radio Amateur should, for the good of the hobby, be a member of their national society, so everyone should be in their local club. As an added bonus, you might just find out about some other aspect of our wonderful hobby to stimulate you during the dark years of low SFIs. Why not give it a try?

A CDXC initiative

Apropos of the above, I have also been thinking how we in CDXC encourage younger people into DXing, and, of course, CDXC itself. Members will be interested to know that I will be tabling a proposal for the 1994-5 Committee to consider for a CDXC Cadet Member scheme. This would allow youngsters to join the club at a discounted rate and grow into DXing through a planned training program backed up with an award scheme. The scheme includes an Elmer system in which established members assist with the development of youngsters living in their area.

I have tried this idea out on some of the younger members of the Reading club. After a couple of iterations, they are enthusiastic about the idea, and would, I believe participate in it if it were to be properly marketed. In my travels around other local clubs, I see young members turning up in more and more of them, so it is reasonable to suppose that a similar response would be found in these clubs too.

So if an initiative like this is to succeed, then it appears that one of the principal "routes to market" will be via the local clubs. Yet another reason for you to belong to your "local".

The RADARC initiative

Let me conclude with a few words about the way RADARC has adapted to the challenge of bringing new members into the hobby. Some six years ago, the committee launched its own project year initiative, in parallel with the RSGB's programme. Guided by Peter, G0PUB, the club has become a registered novice instruction and examination centre, and runs RAE classes and exams.

Today, we have a club that is revitalised by an ever increasing number of novices and young full licensees. They tend to be the active and involved members too. Recently the club has started an award scheme with Bronze, Silver and Gold levels reflecting progressive development and active experience in the hobby. There are also two trophies aimed specifically at young class A licensees.

I am in no doubt that the RADARC initiative has been a huge success, and the final product of this work is, if we so chose, the very people that we should be encouraging into the world of DXing. Yes, you've guessed it: yet another reason for you to belong to your "local"!

Where next?

All the above places me, as an individual, in a bit of a quandary. As an active DXer, I want to progress DXing through CDXC. On the other hand, I really do want to be part of the development process that brings young people into the hobby and exposes them to DXing in particular.

Due to pressure of work, I feel that I really haven't been giving CDXC the amount of time it requires as Chairman, and taking all these factors into account, I have decided that I will not seek re-election to the committee at the forthcoming ARM.

What I would like to do is to focus the use of my available time on youth development in our hobby. This starts at the local club, but involves CDXC as well. I hope that by doing this I will be able to do my bit to keep the hobby, and DXing in particular alive and well.

THAT's ALL THIS TIME!!

Thanks to all contributors for their input - please keep it up! Whilst I prefer to have input on floppy disk in one of the standard word processor formats, as it substantially reduces the amount of work in producing the Newsletter, if you can only send hard copy, I will still welcome it, so please don't be put off if you have no access to a PC.

73 and good DX to all!

Alan Jubb

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